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Man, Bird, and Beast

PUBLICATIONS
of the
TEXAS FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

VOLUME VIII
1930

Edited by
J. FRANK DOBIE

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JUST A WORD

This number of the *Publications* of the Texas Folk-Lore Society comes out a year late. However, those members who paid their dues for 1929 will receive about December a copy of *Coronado's Children,* a book made up of tales about lost mines and buried treasures of the Southwest. While not a regularly numbered publication of the Society, *Coronado's Children* should be worth the two dollars in dues; the publisher thinks it is so good that he is going to charge the public three dollars for it.

The next project of the Society will be a volume of legendary tales about Texas place names, lovers' leaps, birds, animals, flowers and plants, old missions and other historic places, ghosts, figures like Strap Buckner and the Woman in Blue, perhaps certain characters—in fact, any feature of or in Texas that legend has seized upon. Perhaps we had just as well call the volume *Tales of the Texas Soil.* It in conjunction with *Coronado's Children* will consume most of the matter in *Legends of Texas,* now out of print, and will thus take its place.

In his article in the present volume Doctor Payne appears to be concerned in a very scholarly way about "what all this collecting" is leading to. Of course, he is talking about collections of folk songs, but his concern might be applied just as well to collections of any other form of folk-lore. He seems to be saying that the collections should lead to monographic disquisitions on the historical and ethnographic evolution of each particular song with particular attention to its borrowings from other songs. Doctor Payne's point of view certainly has its rights. It is instructive to trace "The Frog He Would A-Wooing Go" back four centuries and note its divergencies. (See Payne's article in *Publications Number V.)* But, personally, I had rather hear Doctor Payne sing his famous song about "the bust-up down in Bell [County]" than read his disquisition.

And this leads to an iteration of another point of view. Frost Woodhull positively refuses to allow science to unveil the mystery attending the cure of sweeny. Like one of Bacon's "simple men" and like Sir Thomas Browne, he must "admire." There

are a great many intelligent people who had rather go with Frost Woodhull out into the horse lot and hear an old cowman discourse on cures for the botts than trace out through its exceedingly involved anthropological involutions "sympathetic treatment" as applied to warts. This point of view is just as legitimate as the other and the enjoyer of a good song or a good remedio will probably do the world as much good after the worms have eaten him as will ninety-nine per cent of the monographers.

I look for two things in folk-lore. I look for flavor and I look for a revelation of the folk who nourished the lore. If the lore interests me, I want to know its history; unless it has something of flavor and fancy and smacks of the folk, then it is not likely to interest me. If a thing is interesting, that is all the excuse it needs for being. Some day, it is quite likely, Miss Jovita González will plunge in and trace her charming stories of the red bird, the paisano, the woodpecker, the cenizo bush, and other objects back to the Middle Ages; but I hope she will not take time do this until she has extracted all the dewy freshness that the Mexican folk of the Texas border put into their tales. "There are many who can spin and sew," said Joan of Arc when they tried to lead her from the head of the French army back to chimney corner duties.

So, gentle reader, I as editor of the *Publications* of the Texas Folk-Lore Society am not at all concerned about "where all this collecting" will lead us. What bothers me is that I can't seize that blind, snaggle-toothed, red-faced, and kindly-featured woman I heard playing a guitar on the streets of Oklahoma City one night and singing "Utah Carl" and "Little Joe the Wrangler"—and *put her down in print for the whole world to relish.* The colleges and universities are full of Ph.D.'s who could write historical learned-sounding monographs on "Utah Carl" and "Little Joe the Wrangler"——but who is going to make that woman vivid and alive and preserve the particular wail and emphasis she gave to her dolorous songs?

Nothing is superior to flavor and vitality. Folk-lore that is interesting—whether it be accompanied by footnotes or not —is good to print and preserve. Let us be grateful to Miss Barns for pinning down old Strap Buckner; let us hope that Mr. Leisy captures the "Fool-Killer." At the same time let us rejoice in Walter Smith's Oklahoma cures, in Belas Carter's

bandit treasure as so realistically reported by Mrs. Smedley, and in hoop snakes. Let us be tolerant and let us pray for gusto.

I had a piece of my own that I wanted to print in this publication but happily there is not room for it. Other material has been crowded out. There will be other *Publications.*

It is a pleasure to call attention to *Folk-Say,* which in 1929 was issued as its first publication by the Oklahoma Folk-Lore Society. B. A. Botkin, of the University of Oklahoma, is the editor. He is looking for flavor as well as learning.

Byron Shipp, the efficient treasurer of the Texas Folk-Lore Society, is to be credited with the work of reading the page proof of this volume and seeing it through the press.

J. Frank Dobie.

The University of Texas,
Austin, Texas,
July 10, 1930.

RANCH REMEDIOS[1]

By Frost Woodhull

I. Questions and Answers

The question of a properly descriptive title for this paper bothered me. Some people call remedios "Household Remedies"; some folks call them "Family Cures"; a few careful persons term them "Home Treatments"; but most of the folks in Southwest Texas call them "Remedios." A remedio is, I suppose, a Mexican remedy. "Remedy" unfortunately contains the hint of a warranty of efficacy, and, as Jimmy Slator said with regard to his remedios, "I give you these without

---

[1]To be pronounced *ray-may-the-os.*

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to and thank S. B. Mumme, without whose interest this paper could not have been prepared. I wish also to thank those who took the trouble to answer my various written appeals. I wrote 225 letters and received 25 replies. Further, I wish to condemn certain of my associates who were "too busy" to make good on their promises to furnish remedios. Personal observation leads me to conclude

warranty or guarantee on my part as to reliability or efficiency"; furthermore, the great majority of the treatments are Anglo-Saxon in their abrupt simplicity rather than Latin in their finesse. But usage covers a multitude of irregularities, especially in folk-lore, and after all a title doesn't mean much.

My original intention was to collect only ancient treatments for live stock, but cures commenced to come in covering ills ranging from drought, muddy water and a lack of wind to teething children, gun-shot wounds and pigs with the stomach-ache. The party grew. I finally opened the doors and welcomed with growing enthusiasm everything that came; I found that treatments for labor pains and freckles were just as interesting as treatments for fistulas and dislocated stifle joints, and I hope that others may find them interesting too—although many people haven't. I was drafted as a substitute speaker on a Conopus Club program. My co-entertainer was a two-hundred-pound night club hostess who gave mammy songs in black-face. "The little girl got a wonderful hand," but my remedios and I produced only an occasional puzzled expression.

I did exclude colored folks' treatments. It looked as if I had to draw the line somewhere, and I thought that someone else might like to give a party for them. I don't know what negroes call their remedios but many of them are extremely interesting. I might give one as a sample:

> Rheumatism: Take an empty whiskey bottle about half full of vinegar; put in a handful of large red ants. Shake well and apply internally and externally.—Mrs. Geo. R. Gillette, San Antonio.

That sounds efficient. Formic acid for ultimate relief, a counter irritant for local relief, and a vast amount of faith for the triumph of mind over matter.

---

that they were "too busy" hanging around drug stores and driving fast automobiles down roads their fathers drove buck-boards over.

For live stock treatments I am particularly indebted to Ab Blocker, Gallie Bogel, and George W. Saunders.

Many of the herbals have been extracted from Henry T. Fletcher's "Vegetation of Green Valley" (West Texas Historical and Scientific Society *Publications*, No. 2, Alpine, 1928) and from Ellen D. Schulz's *Texas Wild Flowers*.

While most of the remedios in both Parts II and III of "Pharmacopoeia Texana" are direct quotations from my informants, the informants have been so many and space for printing is so limited that I have of necessity omitted the names.

I am not at all sure that I know what folk-lore is. I suppose that it is lore which has passed around among folks pretty generally, although that isn't particularly definite. I wonder if folk-lore isn't (1) information which, (2) germinated in mystery and (3) cultivated by those who went before, (4) is sometimes rolled under the tongue with relish and (5) often swallowed without a grain of salt. If that approaches definition, then remedios are folk-lore. Even if the definition is indefinite, it will serve as a sort of framework on which to hang my collection.

One edition of Webster states that "information is news, advice or knowledge; also intelligence." I am not sure about the use of "intelligence" in the present connection, but "news, advice or knowledge" qualifies; and the news can be new or old, good or bad, printed but mostly otherwise; the advice may be ill-timed, sought after, or merely volunteered; knowledge is, I suppose, the sum total of the other two items duly acted upon. There is a printed remedio in Noah Smithwick's *Evolution of a State.* I put the date at somewhere around 1837. Mr. Smithwick traded for a horse which developed a fistula; he says:

> Some one told me that old Natty Moore cured fistula, so I got leave of absence and rode out to his place. The old man said, "Oh, yes, he had cured many cases." I unsaddled the horse and the old man took up an old rusty hatchet, and taking the bridle started to lead him away, bidding me remain. After a time he returned without the hatchet.
>
> "Now," he said, "don't do anything to it; just let it alone and it will go away."
>
> I was curious to know what he had done to it.
>
> "Well," he said, after a moment's consideration, "I'll tell you if you will keep it to yourself. Just take a horse that has fistula to where two roads cross, stand his forefeet right in the center of the cross, and with some old, rusty hatchet or knife mark three times lengthwise and three times crosswise on the afflicted part and throw the instrument behind you without looking around, and the fistula will go away."
>
> I was completely nonplussed, not to say mad, to think I had gone all the way out there on that fool's errand, but the old gentleman was so kind and friendly and evidently believed so implicitly in his remedy that I concealed my chagrin and offered to pay him.
>
> "Oh, no," said he, "that would break the charm." Well, I concluded I would wait a few days and see how the charm worked, but I saw that the fistula was growing, so I applied to Reuben Hornsby, and he gave me a practical prescription, which proved so effective that

I will repeat the formula for the benefit of any one who may be in need of it.

Take the root of the poke weed and boil it till it becomes soft, then mash it into a pulp and apply it hot, also bathing the afflicted parts with the water.

The next time I saw Uncle Natty he inquired how my horse was getting along. "Finely," I told him. "Oh, I never knew it to fail," said he, gratified at the success of his conjuring. I never did tell him how I cured that horse, and he was wont to cite that as an instance of his skill.

Even in those days there appears to have been a younger generation of doubters; Mr. Smithwick adds:

Some time after this, one of his (Natty Moore's) sons came to me and asked how I cured my horse, as he had one that he wished to treat.

"Why," said I, "didn't your father cure it?"

"Oh, h—l, no; he can't cure it; now, I want to know how."

Those remedios contain "news, advice and knowledge."

In the Witte Museum in San Antonio is a note-book or account-book which was used by J. H. Polly, of Lavernia. This book bears dates ranging from 1836 to 1866 and it is impossible to fix the ages of certain household remedies found therein. The information contained is interesting:

Fellons: Strong ley [lye] and tobacco boyled strong together, thicken with cornmeal as a poultice.

But the cure for "dropsey" is shocking news:

Dropsey: One beef gall to one quart of whiskey shaken well together; drink a swallow three times a day half hour before eating.

No one would put beef gall in a quart of whiskey nowadays.

Cavin Woodward, down on the Frio, had a horse which foundered from over-heating. Some one told him that if he'd go down to the river, catch a frog and tie it between the horse's eyes, his horse would be cured; this on the theory that the cool-blooded frog would relieve the over-heating. Cavin said that both the frog and the horse died. He thought that the news was good and the advice bad. A dog suffering from strychnine poisoning can be cured by branding a cross on the dog's forehead. It is a little difficult to understand the mechanics of

that operation, but it's news of a sort. A sure cure for nausea is a broth made from the lining of chicken gizzards. It is perfectly obvious that a chicken will thrive although its gizzard be filled with a collection of rocks and other indigestible matter; the lining of the gizzard must logically possess some remarkable power. The president of a San Antonio land bank told me that his father was never without some dried chicken gizzard linings in his pocket. Whenever the old gentleman felt an attack of indigestion coming on, he pulled out a piece of dried chicken gizzard lining and chewed on it. Relief was immediate. The bank president's family physician states that chicken gizzard linings put up in powdered form are sold in drug stores, and that they constitute a very effective cure for indigestion. If that's true, and I am sure it must be, this remedio is at once good news, good advice and valuable knowledge.

An absolutely positive cure for hay-fever is to smoke coffee grounds in a pipe. Last year during hay-fever season Frank Dobie went into the wilds of Mexico to hunt mountain sheep and hide from hay-fever. I offer him that remedy merely as a matter of information, but it sounds more practical than the effort to have the Texas Legislature remove obnoxious pollen from all the cedar trees in Travis County.

One of my associates used to live over near a couple of old folks. Both of them had rheumatism "awful bad." Some one told them as a matter of information that sleeping with a pelon dog was a sure cure for rheumatism. They got the dog and rapidly got better, but, as is always the case, the pelon dog drew the rheumatism away from them into its own body and died. Then rheumatism took hold of the old folks again and before they could get another pelon dog, the old man died and the old woman is all crippled up. I had always understood that pelon dogs were evolved by the Aztecs for culinary purposes, but it was news to me to learn that they had medicinal value. This pelon dog remedy for rheumatism is pretty well recognized and the pelon dog race is approaching extinction.

Remedios are germinated in mystery. I haven't traced to its source any single specimen; I don't know that I should care to do so if I could. I think I should prefer not to know who put the first silver dime in a horse's shoulder as a cure for

sweeny, why it had to be a silver dime, or when he put it there. We had a ranch in Kinney County for many years. The story went that in the early days there was a Mexican horse-breaker around the ranch who could walk up to a wild horse in the corral, rub him on the neck or head, and after letting him smell a certain weed, saddle the horse and ride it out of the corral, quiet and gentle, with a leg across the saddle horn. I'm glad now I didn't see the Mexican do that. I'd much prefer wondering how he did it, although at one time I used to revel in the sensation that I'd create if I could only get hold of that weed. Frank Byler down in Live Oak County knew a fine cure for warts on cattle. Whenever he saw a cow-brute with warts on it at a water-hole or anywhere else on his ranch, he'd call the cow-brute "Pike." He'd call out to the animal and say, "Hey, Pike, how you making it?", or he'd simply say, "Hello, Pike," and in due course of time the warts on Frank Byler's steer would drop off. I don't believe that any of us would get much out of the intimate details of the life of that remedio. I don't care to know whence it came; I'm only very glad that it came to me. And the same with this:

> Screw worms: I have two uncles that can cure screw worms in an animal without ever seeing the animal. I have seen 'em do it many times. All you have to do is just describe the animal, where the cut is and how bad the screw worms are. My uncles never would tell how they did it but they sure can do it. They never see the animal at all. We had a wild mule that had screw worms in both hind feet so that the animal could not be doctored with ease or safety. I described the animal to one of my uncles who was four or five miles away, and he told me to go on back to the house, that the screw worms would drop out, and they did and the mule got well.—Beal Jester, Chief Deputy Game Commissioner.

Mr. Ab Blocker, who was, and is, probably the greatest of the old-time trail drivers, has told me, as have several others, that a positively O.K. remedy for colic in a horse is to take a tablespoon full of turpentine, or if you'd rather, take two tablespoons full of turpentine, and put the turpentine in a shallow saucer; then hold the saucer to the horse's navel. The astonishing thing about this remedio is the immediate disappearance of the turpentine. It disappears right while you're looking at it. There are other mysteries connected with this remedio besides that of its origin. One wonders why the turpentine

disappears so quickly, where it goes to, and what it does when it gets there. I really should like to know why and where the turpentine goes, but I'd rather continue wondering as to the origin of the idea.

Ellen D. Schulz in her excellent volume on *Texas Wild Flowers,* which is full of the very finest Texas folk-lore, says of the red-bud:

> The bark of the red-bud, or Judas Tree, is supposed to have been used by the old settlers as a substitute for quinine in relieving chills and fever.

The remedy suggests a pleasant picture of some pioneer mother turning to the beautiful red-bud for relief for her malaria-ridden children.

The picture of another pioneer mother making and administering an infusion for the relief of lockjaw is not so pleasant. A prominent San Antonio physician first told me of this cure for lockjaw, but I have since learned that it was well known among the early settlers of Prince Solm's colony of German immigrants:

> I recently went to a place near Fredericksburg on an emergency call. The patient was a young man and I diagnosed the trouble as tetanus. The patient's mother came into the room as I concluded and asked me what I thought. I told her with some gravity that I was afraid it was lock-jaw. To my great surprise, she replied in evident relief, "Oh, I'm so glad it is lock-jaw; I thought it was fits." I thought that lock-jaw was pretty bad and told her so, but she replied that she wasn't at all afraid of lock-jaw, that she could cure that, but that she didn't know how to cure fits. I asked her how she did it and she said that the household remedy for lock-jaw was cockroach tea.

It would be impossible to trace that remedy to its origin. Quite likely it came from Alsace-Lorraine, and it may have originated in the dark ages in some medieval fortress.

A cure for founder caused by over-heating may have originated with the Indians or it may have come in with the conquistadores along with their horses. Mr. Gabe Moore, of Center Point, used to catch mustangs. The favorite way of catching mustangs was to run them down by relay. He said that frequently the whole corral-full would be foundered. Now, a white cord that runs down the frontal bone of a horse divides as it

approaches the nostrils, one small white cord going in each nostril. The skin is split to locate this white cord; to lift it up, a needle is run under the white cord where it branches and then the cord is cut with a knife. Mr. Moore cured nine out of ten cases of founder from over-heating by cutting this white cord in two.

Remedios flourished in a time and place far removed from veterinarians and drug stores. It was difficult enough to get medical attention for human beings. Scientific treatment of live stock was generally unheard of and in some cases specifically distrusted. The owner of a certain ranch in West Texas was a well-known breeder of the light-harness, or standard bred, horse. He bred and raised a horse which as a five-year-old held the state pacing record. He also had the blood brother of this horse, which for some reason or other he decided to geld, and, instead of allowing the ranch hands to perform the operation, as was the general custom, he sent to San Antonio for a veterinarian. There was considerable shaking of heads when the veterinarian appeared with peculiarly shaped knives, clamps and antiseptics, because, as everybody knew, the signs of the Zodiac were high; the patent medicine almanac showed that, and everybody knew that a horse should be castrated only when the signs were low. The horse died. I had a colt that I decided to have altered; he was a beautiful individual, the fifth generation of our own raising. I engaged the services of a graduate of a German veterinary school and the horse died because the moon wasn't right, although the ranch hands stood him in the Guadalupe River for several hours when they saw he was ailing.

Even scientific cures for human beings sometimes have to give way. Here is a cure for pneumonia:

> Take large cabbage leaves and wilt them over a fire to make them soft, then put the leaves all over the sick person's chest, sides and back; wrap a thin cloth around them to hold the leaves on, then pour on vinegar just as hot as the patient can stand it. The patient will begin to sweat right away and the pneumonia will be broken up. My uncle had double-pneumonia a few years ago and they cured him quickly with this remedy.

Those who went before us were of necessity a self-reliant people; theirs was the direct approach and the simple life; they

lived or they died; their surroundings were healthful, but if they or their stock ailed, the materials at hand were not many and they tried what they had. Fire, fire-water, water, and smoke; pepper, salt, and grease; the plant life around them, and frequently a spectacular display of force—these just about constituted the *Pharmacopoeia Texana.*

The Texans had lots of cattle and they had lots of branding irons. Mr. E. E. Townsend, sheriff of Brewster County for many years, sent these experiences in:

Skunk bite: Cauterize the wound with hot iron. I know a Mexican who still lives here that was bitten on the hand while in camp alone one night. In telling us about it he said that he tied a rope about his wrist and then short up to a tree and burned the wound with a red hot iron. Some one asked, "Why did you tie it to the tree?" and he said, "To keep me from running off."

Rattlesnake bite: I knew two men, brothers, who were in camp many miles from aid of any kind. One was bitten by a large rattler on the hand; the other brother quickly shot down a large cow that happened to be near the camp and slit a hole into the abdominal cavity. The bitten hand was thrust into the cavity up to the shoulder. A shade was made over the sufferer and he lay there until the cow's carcass became cold. When the arm was withdrawn, they said it looked like a washer-woman's arm after a hard day's work. There was no ill effect.

They had the tumble-bug, which, according to history or folk-lore, is the sacred Egyptian scarabaeus. Sheriff Townsend gives another remedio:

Poultice: The best drawing poultice is a tumble-bug poultice. It will draw the bucket out of the well. Just mash them up and put them on raw.

Of course they had horses.

Whooping cough: Drink liberal quantities of mare's milk.—Marvin Hunter, Bandera.

Toothache: If we got a toothache when we were out on the range, we cut the first skin off the frog of a horse's front hoof, and then put the skin over the fire and charred it until it crumbled, and put it in the tooth and it would stop the toothache every time.—Pete Anderwald, Bandera.

But it is almost as good just to slice a little piece off the frog and stick it between the bad tooth and a sound neighbor. This will certainly cure toothache.

Plant life there was in plenty, and each botanical specimen seems to have had its own medicinal value. Some plants were useful for many things. Peggy Prassel, of San Antonio, sent in forty or more herbals which have been in use for generations by certain families of Texas Mexicans. Roy Jackson runs a tremendous farm and ranch near Sinton. He has in the neighborhood of two hundred Mexicans on his place, and he says that he's never yet had to buy any medicine for them; that they have some kind of weed, or plant, or bush for every kind of ailment that the vaquero is heir to. He says that one of the Mexicans might have a pocketful of knives but that in case of a snake bite he'd walk a mile to a Spanish dagger rather than use a knife for the purpose of making an incision.

> In exploring new countries we sometimes suffered greatly for water; many makeshifts become necessary. A bullet in the mouth helps some, or a dime or quarter. Copper is the best, but the prickly pear is better than any of them; it keeps the mouth moist and agreeable longer than anything else we ever found.—Colonel Charles Goodnight, Clarendon.

Colonel Goodnight had another use for prickly pear:

> If water is muddy and you wish to settle it, peel off the stickers and outside of the pear, slice and scatter over the top of the water. They will soon sink to the bottom carrying the sediment down with them.

> For founder from over-eating, the horse is drenched with a preparation made from tunas [prickly pear apples]. The tunas are mashed up and the juice is strained out and put in a bottle. Then the horse's mouth is opened and the remedio is poured down.—H. W. Baylor, Uvalde.

> For blisters from hot grease, or for frost-bitten feet, fingers or ears, scrape a raw Irish potato and apply to the parts affected.—Albert West, Uvalde.

Pepper, salt, grease, and water were also important for blisters and burns.

Boil thoroughly about fifty strong red pepper pods, strain through a cheese cloth, then reduce by heat to a small quantity and pour into one pint of melted buffalo tallow. Application of this will relieve the pain in five minutes and it will never return, and the burned parts won't blister. If you don't have the buffalo tallow, use lard, it will answer almost the same purpose.—Colonel Goodnight.

Colonel Goodnight also says:

Salt will counteract the effects of strychnine. To save a dog or person who has taken strychnine, give them a large dose of table salt, swallowed with grease. If you can't get grease, use a small quantity of water—as little water as possible. After the salt reaches the stomach, if the person lives five minutes, he will never die from the poison previously taken.

According to Mr. George Saunders, the best cure for rope burned hands, saddle sores on a horse, etc., was to wash the affected parts with a strong saline solution at body temperature.

Lead bullets had a medicinal as well as a lethal value.

Nose Bleed: Take a lead bullet, mash flat around string and suspend from neck. Positive cure.—Mrs. William Lewis, Uvalde.

Mr. W. W. Collier, of San Antonio, now a bank president, was formerly a Texas ranger. He knows what he is talking about when he says:

One of the remedies for gun-shot wound where medical aid was not available was merely to keep a wet rag on the wound until it healed. Personally I found this to be very efficacious.

Mother Earth herself is a remedy for innumerable ills. Some time ago I went on a three-weeks' pack-train trip in the Sierra Madre Mountains of western Durango. I left civilization against the positive instructions of a couple of oculists, one of whom informed me that my eye might explode, as nearly as I could understand, like a torpedo. I slept on the ground for three weeks at altitudes ranging from eight to ten thousand feet and at temperatures ranging from twelve to twenty degrees. After my first night in camp the eye started to improve and it was quiet by the end of the trip. Several authorities, not oculists, informed me that there was nothing particularly

remarkable in my experience. They said sleeping on the ground effected the cure.

The following is a quotation from *The Second William Penn,* by William H. Ryus, published in Kansas City, Mo., in 1913:

> In the spring of 1861 I went to Burlingame, Kansas, and went to work on the farm of O. J. Niles . . . I took down with the ague.
>
> Mr. Veil of the firm of Barnum, Veil and Vickeroy, who had the mail contract from Kansas City, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico, stopped over at Burlingame, Kansas, and there met Mr. Niles, the man for whom I was working. Mr. Veil told Mr. Niles that he wanted a farmer boy to drive on the Long Route because the stage drivers he had were cowards and not satisfactory. Niles told him that he had a farm hand, but he added, "He won't go because he has the ague." "Oh, well," Mr. Veil replied, "that's no matter, I know how to cure him; I'll tell him how to cure himself." So they sent for me, and Veil told me how to get rid of the ague. He said, "You dig a ditch in the ground a foot deep, and strip off your clothing and bury yourself, leaving only your head uncovered, and sleep all night in the Mother Earth." I did it. I found the earth perfectly dry and warm. I had not much more than engulfed myself when the influences of the dry soil began to draw all the poison out of my body, and I had, as I most firmly believe, the most peaceful and delightful slumber I had experienced since infancy. I gained forty pounds of flesh in the next three months. From that day until the present time I have never had a chill. I have known consumption to be cured with the same "ague cure" on the plains.

The pioneer people had bacon in plenty and they used it for medicinal purposes. A strip of bacon will bring a boil to a head or will draw out a splinter. It will also cure a bunion. Feeding it to hogs will cause screw worms to drop out. A cow that eats it will get well of the creeps.

Bacon will also make hair grow on a horse where the hair has quit growing, and it is useful in case of sprains or bruises, but the most effective use for bacon is in bad cases of lampers. Lampers, as I understand, is a condition in a horse's mouth in which the gums grow out beyond or over the teeth, making it extremely difficult for the horse to feed.

> For lampers: Rub tail with strong rancid-salty bacon rind. Cure at once.—Pat Anderson, Leon Springs.

It speaks volumes for a piece of bacon that, when applied to a horse's tail, it will draw the swelling out of his gums. Bacon has still another use:

Getting rid of the extra cats need not be a problem. Just grease each cat's paws well with butter or bacon rind. They can then be placed in a sack, and dropped at the nearest neighbor with complete success.—Ethel Mackin, Laredo.

The household dishrag had a medicinal value:

For warts, steal a neighbor's dishrag and rub the warts with it. Then bury the dishrag under a peach tree. (An East Texas remedy.) —Mrs. Harold Roney, Leon Springs.

Likewise a grain of corn:

Warts: Prick the wart with a needle, run the needle into a grain of corn and bury the grain of corn.—Peggy Prassel, San Antonio.

Smoke was a favorite cure for distemper:

Burn feathers and tar in a tin can and hold under the horse's nose. This is also good for cattle.—Tom Short, Boerne.

Take a good sized cow-horn, cut the end off to make a funnel of it, then make a smoke of rags and chips of horn and let it go through the funnel into the animal's nostrils.—Frank Dobie.

Their methods may seem cruel, but they did the best they could with what they had.

A fellow came in to a local veterinarian here the other day and told him he wanted some medicine for his horse—it had the colic. The doctor asked him if he had given the horse any medicine, and the fellow replied, "No, all I gave him was a handful of tacks."

The horse died, but that was a brand new remedio for me.—Dutch Hohn, Brenham.

For splint: Rub with tallow and a hot mutton or calf bone, or split the skin and remove the splint with a chisel.—George Saunders, San Antonio.

For bad sprained ankles that cannot be cured otherwise, bathe the sprained leaders with turpentine. Then light with a match and let it burn two minutes, then fan out the flame with your hat.—John M. Doak, Del Rio.

I take the libery of suggesting that best fanning results can be obtained by using a Clear Beaver 7X Stetson with white satin lining, priced at $50.00.

Drastic ailments call for drastic remedies:

For sweeny: Rub with a hot smoothing iron after using a solution of five parts of castor oil to one part of croton oil.—Luther DeVilbiss, Pearsall.

Fistulas are more violent than sweeny and the remedies correspond.

For fistula, before it breaks, brand with a hot iron in the following manner:

In case it has broken and is running, put camphor gum in the running sore and cut off two inches of tail.—John M. Doak.

When fistula has come to a head tie horse down, take a small lump of concentrated lye, push in wound and leave till fresh blood starts, then pour melted lard in wound to stop lye from eating. You have a cure.—W. J. Maltsberger.

Lockjaw is worse than fistula:

Founder and lockjaw caused by overheating can be cured by driving eighteen or twenty nails—make three rows of them—in a board so that the sharp points stick out from a quarter to half an inch. Then lay the board on the horse's forehead and hit the board with a hammer. I have seen my father cure more than a hundred horses which had lockjaw from founder by hitting this board a wallop.—John Grissom, San Antonio.

I am going to give you the most novel remedy I have in mind. Fold blanket several times, place on forehead. Place plank on blanket, strike plank with ax or heavy hammer. The purpose in this is to jar jaws unlocked. I have seen this method used without results, but have been told it is very effective.—W. J. Maltsberger.

For lockjaw, sharpen a long stick and jab it up both nostrils. This causes the horse to bleed so freely that often it appears that he is about to bleed to death.

Another treatment that is quite effective is to knock the horse in the head with an axe. The jar is supposed to shake jaws loose. To prevent killing the horse it is recommended to place a board over the horse's head before hitting.—Edgar Kincaid, Sabinal.

In his three remedios for stifle joint trouble Gallie Bogel sums up on the points of doing the best possible with what is at hand:

(1) Swim the animal.

(2) Tie a strong buckskin string between the ankle and the knee of the leg that is not affected. In just a little while this will cause the horse to put his weight on the other leg and the stifle will slip back into place.

(3) This is a last chance remedio, and is used when all others have failed. Get a ¾-inch rope sixty feet long. Tie one end to the affected leg and the other to the gate post. Now open the gate and let the horse run out. The faster he runs the better. I have used this method of getting the stifle back in place after the horse had gone on three legs for two or three years.

However, cures were not always violent or painful:

For cramps: If cramps in legs at night, turn your shoes upside down under the bed. Will relieve you.—Mrs. L. Evert, San Antonio.

I was riding with a Mexican on the Chaperosa, he being in front. I saw a large rattler strike his horse just below the hock. The Mexican wanted to use the dagger remedy. I objected to this because *I had one to stick me.* I told him I had a better remedy. The horse was lying down and suffering greatly. I stood by the horse, made some signs and pronounced some mystical words. Next day the horse had to be lassoed. This gave me a widespread reputation as having a remarkable remedio.—Henry W. Baylor, Uvalde.

Pioneer folks are ordinarily of direct approach. Their agencies are tangible and visible, but semi-occasionally, and principally along the Rio Grande, reasons are not so readily apparent:

For bed wetting: Feed patient the hind legs of a rat fried crisp.—Marvin Hunter, Bandera.

Broken bones: The Mexicans on the ranch cure broken bones by taking a couple of scaly lizards and killing them. Then they slit the lizard down the belly, from head to tail, and tie them around the broken bone, like a splint. In a week or two the bone is entirely well.—Roy Jackson, Sinton.

A remedio for drought: Hang a picture of the Virgin Mary in a mesquite tree. If rain isn't forthcoming soon, the Mexicans take a little switch and switch the picture.—Gallie Bogel, Fabens.

> For teething children: Rub the swollen gums with the brains of a freshly killed rabbit. Strange to say, this is pretty good.—Gallie Bogel.

Whether rabbits aren't bothered with teething children or whether rabbits have notoriously good teeth seems to be questionable; but as a cure for boils there is no question. The fifteen-year-old son of the owner of a big ranch had been in cow camp for two months as a top hand. They brought him in to the ranch house affected with boils. One of the *gente* went out and shot a couple of paisanos (road-runners) and while the rest of us were eating fried chicken the boy ate fried paisano, and the boils disappeared.

Mad stones deserve an independent investigation. I think that they are the most mysterious of all agencies, and belief in their use was not confined to the territory along the Rio Grande. I take the liberty of quoting from the letter of Mr. Walter Negley, of Fort Davis, late of New Haven and Oxford.

> Only one remedio occurs to me at the moment. It is authentic. It is known as the "Mad-stone." Jim Roberts is my authority. Jim is the old-time manager of Mr. Gage's ranches, a man of parts and substance. A number of years ago, Jim lay asleep on the ground, between two cowboys. A skunk, or hydrophobia cat, crawled in bed with the trio and bit Jim on the forehead. Irate and excited the three were, and one of the boys grabbed a boot and beat the skunk to death in their bed.
>
> Jim was afraid he might take rabies. He recalled to mind that a woman near Van Horn, Texas, was the possessor of a mad-stone. So off he went to Van Horn. It took him three days to make the trip. He found the woman, who gladly permitted him the use of her stone. He applied it to the wound on his forehead, and it "stuck" for twenty-five minutes. After that, it would stick no longer, showing that the poison had been extracted from the wound.
>
> This stone was several inches long, and slightly less in depth and breadth. It was light-colored and porous. It was supposed to have come off the bottom of a sailing vessel. The best mad-stones are supposed to come out of the stomachs of white deer.
>
> A friend of Jim's, also bitten by a polecat, went to this stone, but it would not stick at all—showing the wound was not infected.

Some folks relish their remedios and some folks take them without a grain of salt; and frequently the remedio rolled under the tongue by one has been found effective and is implicity believed in by another. I shall try to give illustrations but I'm

moved first to wonder aloud at the sense of humor which sent Mr. John Lee Brooks in search of a left-handed monkey-wrench when he was looking for "Paul Bunyana" and which built up "Grip" Penn's untold story of the "Milamo Bird" and his well told story of "Whiffle-Pooffle" Fish. Quite naturally I ran into the same sense of humor. One time I was at a barbecue on the Jim Berry Ranch in Frio County. Frank Dobie has already made Mr. Jim Berry famous by having him haul out of a post hole seven or eleven jackass loads of Spanish silver, or it may have been gold. Mr. Berry didn't think so much of Mr. Dobie until *The Vaquero of the Brush Country* appeared, because Mr. Berry never did really find any treasure. In searching for remedios at the barbecue I ran into Mr. Mason Manney, and Mr. Manney said, "Why you ought to get the story of Aunt Mary's salve." After a certain amount of urging Mr. Mason Manney reported that Mr. George Blackaller came into camp one night and as usual proceeded to make his own fire to boil his own coffee. Mr. George Blackaller was in a hurry for his coffee and he grabbed the coffee pot handle while the coffee pot handle was too hot. Then Mr. Mason Manney described what Mr. George Blackaller said and did with regard to the coffee pot handle and his burnt hand, but the most of Mr. Blackaller's conversation expressed a yearning for Aunt Mary's salve.

Old Aunt Mary lived over on Black Creek (which Big Foot Wallace also lived on) and every spring Aunt Mary sent little Juan up the creek to get the finest roots, and sent little Juanita down the creek to get the finest, sweetest smelling herbs. She hung these up in her kitchen until just the right time. And when a mutton was killed she took the finest suet from around the mutton's kidneys and cut it into quarter-inch cubes; then she took rain water out of the barrel and got it to simmering; and then at the right time she put in very carefully the cured roots and the cured herbs; and then just at the right time she put in the cubes of mutton suet one by one; and as the mixture began to slowly boil, with a paddle that had been carved for her out of the choicest white pine she slowly stirred the mixture seven times to the right and six times to the left and five times to the right and four times to the left and so on down and back up, once to the right, once to the left, twice to the right, three times to the left, and so on up to

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six times to the right, seven times to the left, after which the stirring went on and on, down and up and down and up.

The mixture "smelt so good that you could smell it in the middle of a ten-thousand-acre pasture." It smelled so good that one time Old Blue, the hound dog, couldn't resist the smell and came into the room when Aunt Mary was making the salve, although Aunt Mary was a cleanly soul and had chased Blue out of the house many a time. Old Blue stood a-sniffing and waving his tail and Aunt Mary sat a-stirring with her mind on the salve until she happened to see Old Blue standing there waving his tail, and then she got so mad at seeing Old Blue in the house and waving his tail, that without thinking, she hauled off and hit Old Blue right under the tail with her stirring paddle, and Old Blue yelped and clamped his tail down and tore out of the house. "And would you believe it, next morning Old Blue's tail was growed down right tight, just the way Old Blue clamped it—paddle and all."

And Mr. Mason Manney also said, "And there is no telling what would a-happened to Old Blue if that salve had a-been finished instead of being just half done."

Last fall, Scott and Junior Schreiner invited me to go hunting on the famous Schreiner Ranch. I'm afraid I made something of a pest of myself hunting for remedios. One night, hoping to refresh failing memories, I read off a list of remedios which included chicken gizzard linings as a cure for indigestion. There was a sort of silence, and I should have known better but I didn't, because when Scott Schreiner told me that the finest remedy for failing eyesight, or any sort of eye trouble, was a stew made of hawk or owl gizzards, I wrote it down in good faith. It seems that hawks and owls don't have gizzards. Mr. Jack Moore, sheriff of Kerr County for twenty-five years, came in to camp one day with a story of having missed a good shot at a large buck. They sent the camp cook out to kill a couple of hawks for a gizzard stew for the sheriff's eyes, and the cook literally cut the hawks into little pieces trying to find gizzards.

I was told that goat butter was an unfailing cure for croup and I learned later that one can't make butter out of goat milk and that I had furnished considerable entertainment when I wrote down the goat-butter remedy.

In those cases I know that I was the goat but I do not know just how many times other people have been made goats unwittingly. For instance, there is something sort of suspicious in Tom Short's remedy for the croup, although it bears the earmarks of fact.

> Get a fat skunk and render out the lard. It makes a fine, clear lard. Apply the skunk lard to the throat and chest like it was antiphlogiston. This is a good remedy. My neighbors down the river won't use anything else when their children have croup. They keep skunk lard in cans already rendered up.

I am decidedly suspicious of Dutch Hohn and George Altgelt. These athletic persons, as such, dealt me considerable misery several years ago, and I distrust them in spite of George Altgelt's being "glad to hear that you will devote more of your time to the service of mankind in the matter of collecting cures for pioneer ailments." I think that he was rather pouring it on with this cure for hollow horn:

> Dehorn cow close to head,—fill amputated horn with coal oil and newspaper—political paper to be preferred, ignite and throw it over the fence.

Dutch Hohn sent me a number of cures, of which this one for colic is a sample:

> Run down to the pasture, preferably the side of a hill—find a flat rock, spit on it and turn it over. Relief will come immediately.

Gallie Bogel says:

> To cause the wind to blow so that the windmill will pump water for the cattle, get up on the tower and whistle; or set fire to the grass in the immediate vicinity of the windmill.

That sounds all right as far as the whistling goes, but grass is soon eaten and tramped away from windmills, and none is left to burn.

There is variation of the same sort of humor. I wrote to Mr. W. W. Atkinson at Gonzales and asked him for a cure for splint, and he wrote back, "Trade him off quick." I wrote Mr. John Doak at Del Rio, asking for a cure for film over the eye, and Mr. Doak wrote back, "Don't whip the horse over the head."

Some folks enjoy their remedios *per se.*

For cut-worm in a cotton field, have a heavily pregnant woman walk down the field back and forth between the cotton rows. This remedio is used by the tenant Mexican farmers. Apparently it doesn't work for boll-weevil.—Pryor Lucas, Bee County.

And sometimes the joke is on the other fellow. While this remedio came in among Mrs. William Lewis' cures, I think Mr. George Saunders put it there.

To keep beer from foaming (when beer sold for ten cents per bucket): Grease inside of bucket with butter before presenting to bartender to be filled. Result: All beer, no foam, much to the disappointment of the bartender.

Mr. Joe Cavitt, of McGregor, is responsible for this:

When my brother and I were little fellows over in Robertson County, we had a couple of ailing dogs. We did everything we could but the dogs got no better. Finally some one told us that if we'd feed a handful of gun-powder to each of the dogs it would do them lots of good. We did this but still the dogs ailed. We told some old timer about the dogs and about the fact that we'd given them gun-powder, and he said that we had done exactly right except that we'd forgotten to give the dogs a handful of shot along with the gun-powder. We went home and fed the dogs a handful of shot apiece. The dogs died from the shot, although we later learned that we had not administered the shot as our last informer meant for us to administer it.

There is a divergency of opinion in some cases as to whether or not a given disease can be cured, and lump jaw furnishes a good example. It also furnishes a transition between remedios which are more or less enjoyed and remedios which are thoroughly believed in:

Lump jaw is not a disease; it is a condition and comes from non-shedding of teeth and never comes on an animal after it is four years old, as its mouth is then full, so to speak. I have cured many of these cattle after their teeth had ulcerated. When the old tooth does not shed, the young tooth grows back into the jawbone causing the trouble. It is a well known fact that a cow has powerful strength in her jaws—powerful enough to crush a man's hand. So before trying to pull a tooth, make a glut of cottonwood roots, two sizes, in order to fit the animal's mouth, open mouth as wide as possible and insert the glut in the side which opens best, then put in the hand and get hold of the tongue, after which you can pull it out to one side. This will expose the affected

tooth. Take a steel or iron rod a foot or more long, flattened down to a quarter of an inch on point, hollowed out in a crotch so as to easily catch around the diseased tooth. Where the diseased tooth is, the gum will probably be inflamed. Anyhow, make the best guess you can and remove the affected tooth, two if necessary. In spite of you the animal will likely swallow them but no harm will come of it. Herds should be watched carefully and the teeth removed before they ulcerate. Lump jaw is usually overlooked in its earlier stages but generally commences at two years of age. The reason cottonwood root is selected as a glut is on account of its fibrous softness. If the wood was hard the animal would bite on it so strongly that he would break his incisors, which greatly injures him for grazing. The cottonwood root being soft, the teeth will set into it and not break.—Colonel Goodnight.

Gus and I have cured hundreds of cows of the lump jaw by first cutting the lump open and then burning the inside of it with a hot iron. This almost invariably effects a cure, but it never misses if the operation is performed in the summer time when flies are bad and worms are allowed to eat out all the proud flesh before they are killed.—Gallie Bogel.

And some remedios are taken without a grain of salt. I read to a barber the list of remedios which follows. He puzzled in weighty silence for a moment or two and then said, "They ain't anything to that junk, is they?"

I sent a list of remedios to an unusually "strong and silent" pioneer. It was reported to me that he got many a laugh out of them. And it was later reported to me that when his old bay stud-horse developed some particular infirmity, this pioneer was found looking through his desk for my list of remedios.

Mr. Ab Blocker stated that his remedios, a number of which follow, were genuine remedios and he didn't smile when he made the statement. The average person would be kind of cautious in doubting Mr. Ab Blocker.

Another man said that they are "meaty." He may have meant that they were "prime beef" or he may have meant that they were like javalina meat—too strong and easy to get enough of; but whatever reactions these remedios cause in others, I am satisfied with the reaction they had on the greatest of them all:

I have just finished reading the booklet on "Remedios"[1] and outside of some of the Mexican superstitions I find it good; and of course the superstition part is not to be despised, as it lends a bit of color and humor to what otherwise might be a bit dry to some. I do know that certain people can remove warts without ever touching them, so perhaps some of the other remedios which are apparently charms may be perfectly OK and not altogether impossible.

Thanking you for the booklet and with kindest regards, I remain,

Very truly yours,

C. GOODNIGHT.

II. Pharmacopoeia Texana: For Animals

AFTERBIRTH (Cattle):

Tie a light piece of brush or a rock to the piece that is hanging out. The weight will gradually work the afterbirth out if it has not rotted. If it has already rotted, the only remedio is to roll up the sleeves and go after it.

ANTHRAX (CHARBON):

This disease, affecting all classes of live stock and more especially the ruminants, usually is epidemic. Scientists have discovered a very effective treatment for this disease, but in the old days it was treated as follows: Take a soft pine board or a shingle, and drive some eighteen or twenty horse-shoe nails into the board or shingle so that the points will stick out about one-half of an inch. Saturate the affected parts of the animal with undiluted carbolic acid. Then paddle the affected part, being sure that the force of the blow is sufficient to drive the points of the nails into the flesh up to the board. This procedure is sometimes quite a task due to the fact that the parts affected often swell to the size of a small wash-tub. The peculiarity of anthrax is that the blood in an animal dying from it will not coagulate.

ANTISEPTIC LOTION:

An antiseptic lotion is made by steeping the twigs of leaves of the creosote bush in boiling water. Used for treating sores and wounds of man and beast.

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[1]The "booklet" was privately mimeographed in 1929; the contents, with many additions, are all contained in the present treatise.

BLACK LEG:

Cut off dew claws from legs where the disease is seated.

Cut a hole in brisket and tie a piece of rope or cord in the hole. They used to do the calves this way at the time they marked and branded them.

BLADDER TROUBLE (Horse):

Break off a match head and insert in the horse's penis. Relief will be very sudden. This is the best remedio for that trouble but another good one is to saturate cloths with turpentine and hold the same across the animal's loins.

BELLYACHE (Horse):

Set fire to a gunnysack, place in a bucket and hold under the horse's nose so that he breathes the smoke.

Bathe belly with strong red pepper tea, then make him drink half a pint of same. Patient will stampede, but lose cramps.

See *Botts.*

BLEEDING:

If an artery is cut and the animal is bleeding to death, get your Bible and read a certain verse therein, and the blood will stop. Remember you must have faith in it.

Mash up mushrooms and apply to the cut, or apply snuff. Also apply cobwebs or soot.

BLEMISH (Horse):

Apply *sebo,* or tallow, with a hot bone.

BLOAT IN CATTLE:

Drench them with raw linseed oil. If a pint does not bring relief in 30 minutes, repeat the dose.

Bloat is sometimes treated by sticking the animal with a pocketknife between the second and third rib and inserting a quill to let the gas escape.

BOTTS OR BELLYACHE:

One of the best horses owned by the town livery stable took the bellyache after being driven to an adjoining town by a smart drummer. The horse was about to die and so he got

busy. First the horse was stimulated with a pint of whiskey but without results. He was then drenched with a couple of pounds of salts, after great trouble. The next day the horse was still alive but apparently very far from well. The drummer drove the horse back to the livery stable after many hours of plodding. I was sent for but the horse died very soon of pneumonia. (Probably all the whiskey and salts had ended up in his lungs.) The news spread around that the botts had killed the best horse in town. I saw that my chance had come, and so I got ready. I bandaged the little finger of my left hand, using plenty of turpentine. I put a small bottle of turpentine in my pocket. I carefully rolled a number of powders and put them in my bag. That night I got a call. I rushed as I had never rushed before, but as usual I was met at the gate with the information that Dobbin was very much better and that I would not be needed after all. This time I asked to see Dobbin, entrusting my bag to the man with the lantern. I walked around the horse, got out my turpentine, filled the palm of my hand with it, and rubbed it on the horse's belly. The horse began to be uneasy and finally got down on his belly. The farmer was now frightened again and asked me to save his horse. I looked the horse over carefully, got my bag, and after much effort, and with the help of the farmer, I managed to spread one of the powders on the horse's tongue. Soon the horse seemed to be some better; so I prescribed a second dose. This time the horse did not seem to mind so much and actually seemed to enjoy the medicine. He enjoyed it so much that he seemed to be begging for some more. I noticed it and prescribed another, as the horse seemed smart enough to know what was good for him. I received two dollars for my trouble, and fifty cents a dose for the powders, and the horse got some much needed table salt. You know very few farmers give their horses salt. Yes, everyone in the town heard from the farmer how quickly I had cured his horse of the botts.—Edgar Kincaid, Sabinal.

Drench the horse with one-half ounce of chloroform and one-half ounce of spirits of niter.

Drench with pint of kerosene.

Get rider on the horse and run him around the pasture.

Use tea made from tobacco.

A horse which has the botts will twist his head around to the side and look toward his stomach. When you find one ailing roll up his upper lip and rub it vigorously with a corncob which has been saturated with turpentine. Relief will come in a few minutes. The horse will quit looking toward his side.

Bleed under right eye and at cord of eye. This is good and is much better than cutting off the tail.

Drench with a strong cup of coffee.

Jab the sharp point of a pocket knife into the third bar of the roof of the mouth.

Hold a teaspoonful of turpentine under the horse's navel until the turpentine evaporates into the horse's stomach.

Don't feed horse or mule for 24 hours. Then give it one quart whiskey. Botts will all be intoxicated within one hour. Then give patient one pound epsom salts, in warm water. All botts will be exposed to day-light within two hours from taking salts. Next day give patient all ice water it wishes to drink and feed it all it wishes to eat.

Feed the animal green feed and drench with equal parts of water and molasses and give a dose of chloroform immediately after drenching. They turn loose to eat the molasses.

Make a strong tea out of tobacco and mix it with sorghum molasses. Be sure that it is sorghum molasses. Then drench the horse with the mixture, about a pint. Botts like sorghum molasses very much and they turn loose to eat the molasses and then they get sick on the tobacco tea.

Act quickly! Drench with sage tea and molasses. The bott worms turn loose to sup up the molasses and the sage tea stupefies them enough so that they pass on without further harm.

BROKEN OR DISLOCATED LIMB:

Heat a large rock and place the injured part over it, then pour cowboy urine on the rock slowly and cover the patient with blankets to hold the steam in; they claim this will remove all inflammation and pain.

CANCER-EYE:

When the cancer first starts cut off the upper or lower eyelid, whichever is affected, and burn good with a hot iron. Old cases of cancer-eyed cattle can be cured by removing the eye and clipping off the eyelids and burning with hot iron. The eyelids

keep the cancer irritated; therefore it is very necessary to remove them.

There seems to be no cure for what is called "cancer-eye." In fact, it is not cancer at all, but may become cancerous from fly poison alone. This cancer-eye is invariably caused by flies biting the tender eye when it becomes diseased, and we call it cancer. It is not contagious but is easily inoculated; in other words, a fly bites the diseased cow and carries the infection to another cow. A cow with the cancer-eye should be disposed of promptly. I've proven this theory to be true. Some years ago breeders set out to remove the red circle from around the Hereford's eye; in 25 years, they have thoroughly succeeding in doing so. I imported the first Herefords into the Panhandle of Texas; every one of them had the circle around the eye and in those days I never bought a bull unless he had it. Today you can't find one with it, and the removal of it is the greatest blunder breeders ever made. They have worked on these white eyes until they now have them as tender as a human being's; hence the loss from fly bites is considerable. I have offered five hundred dollars for any one finding a case of cancer-eye in polled angus cow or in any other cow with solid color around the eye. I never had to pay the reward.—Charles Goodnight.

CASTRATION:

Castrate only when the signs of Zodiac are low. Cool dry weather is best. Don't castrate when it's cold and wet.

Pull the horse's tail three times after the operation and the horse will never die.

CHOKE:

Drench through the nose with a quart of linseed oil.

Make the horse jump over the wagon tongue.

Jump the horse off a place three or four feet high.

Pour water in his ear so he will shake his head.

Take an axe. Find the lump in the throat. Hold the flat part of the axe against the lump. Hit it with a hammer and break the lump.

For choke caused by eating dry oats: Tie horse's head up in a tree, pour six raw eggs down his throat, then close his mouth.

CHOLERA (Chickens):

Use the inside bark of black-jack trees in their drinking water.

Feed dry clabber and soda, half and half.

COLIC (Horse):

Throw horse—tie his feet—place him on his back and paddle stomach vigorously with a short 1x4.

Take a tablespoonful of turpentine, hold it to the horse's navel until it is all absorbed. Relief immediate.

Take a pint of vinegar with a nickel package of soda. Mix well. Put a bridle on horse. Pull his head over a limb and pour into horse's nose. If no relief, drench in same manner, follow in 10 minutes with a pint of linseed oil and a quart of molasses.

Don't let animal stand still; keep him moving.

Tie him down and whip his belly with a wet rope.

Throw animal down and pour turpentine in navel. Then let him up, mount him and run him for some time, until gas escapes.

Drench with soda water—half pint of kerosene oil.

Ride or drive the animal until relieved.

Take ordinary spirits of turpentine, one tablespoonful to one teacup of table salt. Mix this in an old quart whiskey bottle and fill the bottle full to the top with water. Drench with this as one dose. This is the best remedy in Texas for colic. It works just as well for bloody murrain.

Drench with soda and water.

Drench with half teacup cooking soda, two teacups molasses in a quart bottle filled with water.

COLIC (Cow):

Stick a butcher's knife high up near the back of the right flank. The cow nearly always dies.

There's a place up near the loin that you can pierce with a knife and allow the gas to escape, but an ice pick is better.

COLIC (Pig):

If pig is about to die with colic caused from eating cottonseed, kill him and eat him.

CREEPS:

This is a form of disease which affects cattle during protracted droughts when there is no green feed for a long period of time. The animal walks with a rather stealthy gait as though it were trying to slip up on something. In the advanced stages the animal affected has a pacing or rocking gait. Treatment: (1) If the cow affected has horns, immediately saw the horns off as close as possible to the skull. Pull out the tongue as far as possible, then place a strip of bacon on the larynx of the animal, and hold the tongue until the animal has swallowed the bacon. Then take a sharp knife and cut off the end of the tail so that it will bleed freely. (2) Saw off the tips of the toes well up into the quick. (3) I personally have gotten better results by the use of three or four pounds per day of cottonseed meal in a feed trough together with a good filling of hay, for thirty or forty days. I will warrant this last treatment.

DISTEMPER:

Put some bluing in water and give it to the horse to drink.

Pour a teaspoonful of coal oil in each ear, then ride or drive the animal. It'll make the phlegm turn loose right now. Absolutely good remedio and I have cured horses that couldn't lean over to drink. We had a tanking outfit on the ———, and the whole outfit got down with the distemper and we cured them this way.

The best old remedy I know of for distemper is to put pine tar and feathers together and smoke them.

Make a good smoke, and let the horse stand in it and inhale same.

See prescription by Frank Dobie and Tom Short, page 21, *ante.*

DISTEMPER (Dogs):

Three grains of opium, five grains of calomel, one hundred grains of cream of tartar.

FILM OVER THE EYE:

Use dry salt well pulverized by blowing it into the eye with a paper quill, or use sugar the same way.

Salt in the eye and lard on the outside, more especially in that hole above the eye.

Powdered calomel blown in the eye.

Called Hooks, is a very bad disease, caused from strain from over-pulling or setting back on rope. Removing with knife is only remedy I know of.

FISTULA:

Put a few drops of croton oil on. It'll make him jump, but it'll cure him sure.

Take sharp pointed iron like old time running iron and heat red hot and run it through infected or swollen part, beginning low down and burn clear through to mane, so place can have drainage.

Rub turpentine on the affected parts, using plenty. Cover with a thick wool rag or blanket and iron with a hot flat iron. Be sure and have the horse securely tied. An old horse trader says he once treated the laziest horse he ever owned this way. He tied the horse with a large, but rather rotten, rope. The horse promptly broke the rope, jumped the corral fence and wasn't seen again for weeks.

Cut off one inch of the tail bone and take out about one inch of gristle in the nose between the nostrils of the affected horse. Honestly, this remedio seldom fails.

Make an incision in the swollen place, insert half teaspoon of arsenic through a quill into the opening. This gives the horse fits but it is a sure shot.

Run circle around spot with hot iron.

We used to burn a circle with a cross in it. Another old remedy was to run a hot iron through fistula. Another, dampen the place with turpentine, spread a cloth over it and then take a warm smoothing iron and iron it in. The best remedy I have of late is caustic balsam. The above remedies are also good for poll-evil.

When it first starts, use solution of one part of castor oil to one part of croton oil well rubbed in. If the wound has broken and is running, put bulk, or unslaked, lime in the wound. Same remedy for poll-evil.

Apply hot tallow and rub in with the hot cannon bone of a cow or horse. Brand the affected parts with red hot branding

iron. It seems that the tallow treatment is not always effective, and the branding leaves a very telltale sign.

Gumball's Caustic Balm rubbed in well on several different occasions. The horse must be tied with a good strong rope as this treatment is very severe. The hair comes off and the horse looks as if he were ruined, but it is a sure shot if used often enough.

Cut it out, and let the horse run in the pasture ten or twelve months.

Cut off 1½ inches of tail bone—some say only ½ inch—and turn the animal loose for 60 days. This treatment should be given before the fistula begins to run.

When you see that the horse has fistula, take a small bottle of castor oil, pour it out in your hand and rub the withers well. In two days repeat the rubbing. Be sure that it is well rubbed in, then in two days repeat the application. The three treatments will cure any case of fistula.

See remedios suggested by John M. Doak and W. J. Maltsberger, page 22, *ante*.

FITS (Dogs):

Give gum arabic, a piece the size of a pea.

FOOT ROT (Goats):

Make a mixture of the following in an old wooden bucket: Two teaspoonfuls of alum, two and one-half teaspoonfuls of turpentine and one and a half gallons of water. Wash the goat's feet in this. It is enough for one hundred goats.

FOUNDER (Horses):

Cut the horse's hoofs down very short in front and then file them until they bleed freely. Then soak each foot well in a vessel containing tallow, heated to about 110 degrees. The horse affected by this disease should not have grain of any kind.

One of our horses got foundered from over-heating and a Mexican told me to hang a frog between his eyes and he'd get well. I hung the frog between the horse's eyes, but both the frog and the horse died.

Clean the foot out thoroughly and, holding it turned up, fill full of turpentine and light a match to the turpentine. Hold the foot up until the turpentine burns out.

Bleed frog of feet. Then pour turpentine in the feet. Give lump of alum size of a pea.

Burn the bottoms of feet with oil and hot iron rod.

Caused from over-riding. Stand the horse in water up to his belly for three hours.

Stand animal in water that will cover the ankles until his bowels have moved good from a dose of one pound of epsom salts.

Split hoof at edge of hair until it bleeds well.

Cord the horse's leg until the vein puffs out; then cut the vein. Use hair from the horse's tail to cut off the flow of blood.

There are about as many different kinds of founder as there are remedies. One remedy in old days was to fill frog of foot with turpentine, then drive same in by holding hot irons to foot. Alum is another remedy which is still in use.

Caused from over-eating, especially too much corn and then made to get too warm. Remedy, hold foot or feet upturned and pour real hot tallow in cup of foot, and hold it there for few moments.

Stand the horse in water two or three feet deep several hours a day for a few days.

Steam hoofs with hot applications, then give about one hour of brisk exercise.

Put half an inch of boiling tallow in a pan or skillet and hold the bottom of the horse's foot in it.

Drench the horse, using one pound of salt in warm water. Walk him and keep exercising for half a day.

See remedy of tuna juice, page 18, *ante,* and Gabe Moore's directions for cutting the white cord, page 15.

GLANDERS:

Kill him before he gives it to other horses.

HOLLOW HORN:

Pour turpentine down and along the line of the back.

This is caused by poverty. The best cure is to cut off the horn.

Cut off the horns, split the tail, put salt and pepper in the hole in the tail. Tie it up. Cure every time.

Drill a hole in horn and fill hollow part full of turpentine and split the tail in the hollow part. (East Texas fellows along the Louisiana line swear by this one.)

Split the tail and fill the split with salt; and bore holes in the horns and fill the horns with coal oil.

Bore small holes through the horns, near the head .

HOOF SPLITS:

With pocket knife bore a little hole in hoof at upper end of the split. This will keep the split from running on up.

HOOKS: See *Film over the Eye.*

KIDNEY SORES:

Alum powder put on with hot water will eat out all the proud flesh and it will heal up fine.

LABOR PAINS:

Feed afflicted animal a handful of parched corn.

To increase labor pains in a goat and insure thorough clearing feed the animal a few branches of mistletoe.

LAMENESS:

From prickly pear thorns. A sure cure is to take a large beef bone and heat it in the fire, warm some tallow and spread it on the horse's leg and rub it in right good with the beef bone. This is the only thing that will melt the thorns inside the horse's leg and it is infallible.

Hot poultice of prickly pear leaves. Applications of kerosene oil.

LAMPERS:

Cut them out and sear with a hot iron. Burn out thoroughly with a red hot iron. Repeat every time they come back if you have failed to trade the horse off in the meantime.

Scar the gums right good with a pocket knife, criss-cross the cuts and don't cut too deep and don't ever try to burn out the lampers because it'll ruin the horse. The best cure is to scar the lampers right out.

Cut the lampers in three places.

Burn the mouth with a hot iron.

Grease his tail and croup with old bacon rind and grease. When a horse has lampers he rubs himself up against trees and if you don't grease his tail he'll rub all the hair off.

LOCKJAW (Horses):

Technically, lockjaw is tetanus, but a form of founder in which the jaws become locked is also called lockjaw. Treatments for one kind of lockjaw apply to the other.

The most effective remedy I know of is the use of chloroform. The whole object of all treatments for this disease is to force the animal to swallow and relax the muscles of the jaw. The horse is thrown down and chloroform (ordinary stock chloroform will do) is used on the horse as doctors use it for an anaesthetic. The horse is put to sleep, and thus the muscles in the body are relaxed.

Bathe both jaws in strong tobacco juice. Don't pry the jaws open because to do so may bruise the horse badly.

Bleed in the third bar of the mouth.

From running a horse too much. Cut the flat white cord just over the horse's nostrils and the jaws will fly open immediately.

Shove tobacco in the side of the mouth until the animal becomes nauseated, it will cure the lockjaw.

Drive a nail into the suture of the horse's skull. This is a sure cure unless the nail kills the horse outright.

Bleed in the mouth. Also there is a certain vein in the neck that can be cut to afford immediate relief.

Jab a sharp pointed stick up the nostrils. The shock does the work.

See also page 22, *ante.* See *Founder.*

LUMP JAW:

See quotation from Goodnight, page 28, *ante.*

Burn with a hot iron.

Get a hammer, steel chisel and a small board 4 or 5 inches wide. Tie your animal down, open the horse's mouth wide enough to get in your board. Take your hammer and chisel, and knock out the blind tooth. You will find the tooth just about where the lump on the jaw is.

Tie your animal down. Burn a cross on the lump with a red hot iron.

Kill the animal and burn it.

Use nitric acid when it first starts by rubbing the affected place with a soft cloth, but if the jaw has begun running, then ship the animal or kill it.

Never have found a remedy for lump jaw but a bullet.

Generally an infection of a tooth. Remedy, pull or chisel it out.

Cut lump open, insert salt and lime. Next allow screw worms to eat a while, but not too much, as worms can kill an animal.

See quotations from Goodnight and Bogel, pages 28 and 29, *ante*.

MALO (Goats):

Boil two double handfuls of goat coffee in a gallon of water on a camp fire over night. Strain the next morning and while still hot run this into the backbone.

PINK EYE:

For any affection of the eyes, use salt or sugar in the eye.

Wash with urine either human or animal.

POISON THORNS:

Our most annoying ailment in this country to horses is caused from a thorn known as the "devil's head," a species of the cactus. This devil's head is a plant that sets on the ground like a cabbage; the large thorns come out all over it and turn down like hooks. The horse brushes over it with foot and catches the thorn. These thorns are poison; they work to the bone, causing loss of hoof—if the horse escapes lockjaw. There is no remedy unless the thorn is found in time to cut it out.

POISON WEED (Goats):

To cure a goat which has been stricken with poison weed, give the animal gum of camphor, a piece about the size of a pea. Don't try this unless you think the goat is going to die anyway.

PNEUMONIA (Goats):

Make a tea from the leaves of Jerusalem oak wood. Give the goat one-half teacup cold. Anything hot will kill the goat.

POLL-EVIL:

When it first starts rub in a solution of one part of castor oil to one part of croton oil. If the wound has broken and is running, insert bulk or unslaked lime in the wound.

PUNCTURED HOOF:

Let the puncture form a head and break of its own accord. Don't cut or scrape.

RABIES (Dogs):

When a dog has rabies, burn a cross on the dog's forehead with a branding iron. We had a shepherd puppy that was bitten by a hydrophobia wolf. We treated him this way and he lived to be an old, old dog.

RATTLESNAKE BITE:

The remedy herein set out is one sponsored by the Mexicans in Southwest Texas, and I have seen it used on several occasions with good results. However, this treatment should be applied at once. Take a sharp knife and scarify the wound until it bleeds freely. Cut the tips from five or six blades of a Spanish dagger, stick them under the skin all around the wound, and leave them there for twenty-four hours. This perhaps does not sound so scientific, but you could try it sometime in an emergency.

Throughout much of the southern coast country and the chaparral along the Rio Grande, a most common remedy for rattlesnake bite is to puncture the section around the snake bite with the thorns from the Spanish dagger. The mode of procedure is to hold the flesh rigid and take the point of the dagger leaf and shove it into the flesh until the bone is reached. These punctures are made in a circle around the snake bite. I have heard of many cases that were successful. I saw a horse at Pearsall that had a very peculiar scar about half way up the front leg that was said to have come from the application of this remedy for snake bite. It is said that the flesh surrounded by the punctures will rot and drop out, after which the hole will heal up. I am wondering if the so-called cures came from a counter-irritant or from some poison that may belong to the yucca thorns.

Apply hog lard to the wound. Heat the lard and have patient drink all possible. For animals drench them with warm lard out of bottle. A dog will eat the lard. Fat hogs are immune from snake bite.

Scarify flesh as deep as the fangs went, making at least two incisions where each tooth has hit. Apply fine salt. The animal will never swell or get lame. This applies to man as well. A good remedy for all poisons, spider bites, centipede bites, even poison oak.

If the swelling is bad apply cold mud or clay as poultice. Change frequently in order to keep the poultice cool. Buffalo manure seems to be better than anything else; cow manure is good, but be sure to keep it cool. There is nothing better, however, than a large prickly pear leaf. Cut off the outside, pound up the pear, and apply as poultice, an inch thick if possible. Keep moist with water and change when it gets warm.

Jab swollen places with sharp instrument until black blood and yellow water come, which will be the poison.

Spanish daggers is pretty good. Just puncture around the bite so that the poison can run out; but it is just as good to make a fire right away and get a chunk of fire and hold it just close enough to where the animal is bitten so that it won't scorch the hair. This heat will draw out all poison.

Cut a handful of spines of the Spanish dagger and jab these into the animal where he is swelled the most. The poison will run out in clear crystalline drops through the holes made in the skin by the spines. No fooling, this an A-1 remedio. We use it on all our stock bitten by rattlesnakes.

Stand him in mud and rub with kerosene oil.

We have used coal oil to good advantage and if the bite was about the head, I have seen Spanish daggers used to make openings for drainage.

After sticking with Spanish dagger, apply kerosene or tallow.

Soda and vinegar is good.

Bathe well with kerosene oil.

Blister with turpentine.

Scarify the bite and pour coal oil on it. I have cured several horses this way so that they could be ridden the day after they were bit. If the bite is on leg or ankle and you can stand the leg in a five gallon can of coal oil, relief will occur in one-half hour.

Tie tourniquet above wound. Then jab with Spanish daggers.

RUNNING FITS (Dogs):

Use four doses of gunpowder.
Four small doses of chewing tobacco.

SADDLE SORES:

Apply a decoction made from the roots of the Texas buckthorn.

Poultice with the mashed leaves of the creosote bush, or use an antiseptic lotion made by steeping the leaves and twigs of the creosote bush in boiling water.

Apply a salve or poultice made of jimson weed.

Spread strong bacon grease all over the sore; it will heal up and the hair will grow over it.

Apply old time axle-grease.

Burn the espinas off a prickly pear leaf, split the leaf, and apply as poultice to the sore.

Wash the sore with cowboy urine. None of the remedies will do any good unless the horse is turned out. If the saddle is kept off him long enough the sore will heal up anyhow.

See *Set-Fasts.*

SCREW WORMS:

Ponder on Beal Jester's remarkable testimony, page 14, *ante.*

Feed a dog rancid bacon and screw worms will drop out.

Now in hogs it don't make any difference in what portion of his anatomy the screw worms are located, if you feed him a chunk of salt pork or a piece of old rancid bacon the worms will drop out and the wound will heal.

SCOURS:

Bind the tail about 3 inches from the root with a stout cord, or use hair of horse's tail. Let stay bound not longer than four hours.

SET-FASTS:

Remove the tumor by operation, let it thoroughly cure up before using the horse. See *Saddle Sores.*

SORE MOUTH (Sheep or Goats):

One cup of blue-stone in bucket of water. Hold animal's mouth in solution up to eyes five seconds at a time, three times. Sure cure.

This disease comes in goats and sheep in the spring of the year. Mexicans and others of their ilk believe that it is caused by grazing while the dew is still upon the grass and weeds; at any rate, once this disease starts in a flock it spreads very rapidly, and practically every goat and sheep in the flock will be affected by it unless it is stopped by the remedy set out hereafter, to-wit: Make a mixture of 50% kerosene oil, and 50% lard, put about one pound of salt in every gallon of the mixture; take a sponge or rag and thoroughly wash the mouth and nose, as well as the tongue, of each goat and sheep in the flock with the mixture above described. I have used this remedio with very satisfactory results.

SPLINT:

Split the skin and remove the splint with a chisel.

Rub beef or mutton tallow all over swollen place with a hot bone. Do this every few days.

Rub splint with hard twisted rope every two or three days, for thirty days.

Rub several times a day with some kind of liniment.

Trade him off quick.

SPRAINS (Horse):

Take a piece of cloth and make a pouch around the horse's ankle. Fill this with salt, tie it up and then wet the salt. I have used this remedy many times myself, and it takes the soreness out over night.

Apply tallow and rub with hot bone. A mutton bone is best. This is a good remedio.

Bathe sprained leaders with turpentine. Then light with match, let burn two minutes, and fan out blaze with your hat.

STIFLE JOINT:

Pull limb back in place with a rope.

Sometimes swimming the horse in deep water will cure.

Take the horse to the creek and stand him in the water for 24 hours.

Bleed the horse by sticking a cob through the blade to keep from going in too deep. Bleed him all around the top of the hoofs.

Burn a circle around the stifle joint about four or five inches in diameter and burn a dot in the middle. Apply kerosene afterward.

See Gallie Bogel remedy, page 23, *ante.*

STIFF JOINT:

Bind with hot prickly pear poultice three times a day for several days.

SWEENY:

There are a lot of cures for sweeny. Loosen the skin and pull it up and then make a hole through it and sew a hair from the horse's tail through like you would sew a sack together. Another good one that I used lots of times was to rub turpentine on the sore with a corncob.

A silver dime under the skin on the shoulder is the only certain cure. Cut a slit in the skin on the withers, and insert the dime. It'll work around and make the horse absolutely sound.

Slit the hide on the front of the shoulder; take a case knife and work it in between the hide and the bone in the form of a circle about four inches in diameter. Pull the hide loose all around the circle. Then fill up that hollow place with salt and pack it in. This will sure cure them. I cured a little black cutting horse with this remedy after the old dime remedy failed completely.

A good remedy is to rub the shoulder regularly with a corncob.

One of the old remedios for sweeny was to split a small hole at the top of the shoulder and put a dime in it, then take a quill, blow it full of air and then take a needle and take a stitch or two to hold the air in.

Jab the shoulder where it has perished to the bone with a sharp awl. Then cut a trench in the frog of the same foot from the heel to the point of frog, bringing blood, then cut across where the frog forks.

Scarify place, scrape bone, and insert a silver dime next to bone. Leave dime in place.

Fill a shingle full of rather long tacks, so the points of the tacks extend well through. Spank the affected shoulders or shoulder with this. Apply American liniment by rubbing thoroughly. (Young American liniment is made by beating either the yolks, whites, or perhaps the whole egg with vinegar.)

Take one dozen raw eggs, mix with coarse salt till thick, add bacon grease. Rub shoulders hard with this mixture, then spread over shoulders and leave for 12 hours. This sounds simple but effects have never failed me yet.

Puncture two holes through hide on shoulder, pass string through holes, leaving long ends, then pull string back and forth each day. Some would use leather in place of silver in shoulder; others would puncture shoulder and blow through quill to loosen hide on shoulder. This remedy is still in use to a great extent.

Locate the tender spot on shoulder of animal by pressing with thumb and finger. Make an incision in the tender spot with a small sharp knife, then raise skin up and down, getting as much air under skin as possible, then press and move the air around under the skin, fill again and leave full of air until next day. Do this once a day for four or five days. The animal should not be worked while taking this treatment.

Pull the hide loose and knead the shoulder each day.

Slit the skin and tie mane or tail hair through the slits.

Bathe the parts with caustic balsam every other day for three days. Do not use the animal for one month.

See page 22, *ante.*

STRYCHNINE POISON (Dogs):

Remedy I used when my hound dog got a poison bait intended for wolves was soap (washing) suds diluted with water forced into its throat through a bottle or powder horn, which immediately caused vomiting.

The Mexican remedy for this was branding a cross on the dog's forehead with a hot iron.

TETANUS: See *Lockjaw.*

WARTS ON CATTLE: See Frank Byler's "Pike cure," page 14, *ante.*

WIRE CUTS:

Use yellow axle grease.

WOMB OUT (Cow):

Grease well and push back in. Next insert a quart whiskey bottle. Leave the head of the bottle sticking out and sew the vagina up with baling wire. In about ten days the cow is well. This is an O. K. remedio.

WORK SORES: See *Saddle Sores.*

WOUNDS:

The finest remedy for wounds is wild tobacco—frost-weed. Dust on a kind of powder made from the dry leaves, or make a poultice with the leaves. The powder dries it up.

Dried cow chips pulverized both dries and soothes the fresh wound. If lime is used it should be mixed with sand or pulverized cow chips, for it is often too strong applied alone.

III. Pharmacopoeia Texana: For Human Beings

AGUE:

Eat lots of chili pepper.

See quotation from Ryus, page 20, *ante.*

ANEMIA:

For anemia, and also as a tonic to enrich the blood, boil leaves of the pecan tree and drink like tea.

ANT BITE:

Soda and vinegar mixed.
Mud or fresh cow dung.
Strong solution of salt.

ARROW WOUND:

Captain James Cook, in *Fifty Years on the Old Frontier* (Yale University Press, 1923), tells an experience he had with the Indians down on the Nueces River in the early seventies. He was shot by the Lipans with what he feared to be a poisoned arrow. "The Mexicans split some cactus leaves, burned the

thorns off, heated them thoroughly, and bound them on my leg. They also took pepper berries and inserted them in the wound."

ASTHMA:

Go down to the river and catch a frog. Pry open the frog's mouth and blow your breath into it. This must be done before daylight in the morning. The frog will die before sundown, but the asthma will go into the frog and will never bother the sufferer again.

Tea of the jimson weed.

Bee's honey mixed with sulphur; dose, a teaspoonful hourly until relieved.

Tea of the leaves of the evergreen sumac.

A drug made from the buttercup.

BACKACHE:

Fold a piece of red cotton flannel six feet by two feet wide, and cut a hole in the center of the fold large enough to put your head through. Put this garment next to your body and secure it by fastening on the sides with two safety pins. The backache will soon leave and will never return if you never remove this shirt.

BILIOUSNESS:

For biliousness, and also to sharpen the appetite, boil or soak over night *palo amargoso (Castela nicholsonii)*. Does, one-half cup before meals.

BIRTHMARKS:

Birthmarks on small babies will vanish if some one (in the case I heard about it was the grandmother of the baby), will get out of bed early and go to the baby's bed and lick the birthmark three times for nine successive mornings, without saying a word to anyone.

Rub the birthmark with a piece of raw meat, and then bury the meat. The scars will disappear.

BLADDER TROUBLE:

Make a tea from watermelon seeds. Drink a plenty.

BLEEDING:

If anyone bleeding from a cut or anything will hang a bunch of keys around his neck, the blood will stop instantly.

Where an artery is cut, sear with a hot iron. Where a vein is cut, apply a mixture of charred feathers and cobwebs and bind these on the cut.

When I was a young girl, I cut the artery in my wrist on a broken window pane. We were too far away from town to get a doctor and I thought I was going to bleed to death. My grandmother went out in the yard and picked up a stone from the ground. Then she put the side of the stone that had been next to the ground on the cut and that stopped the bleeding.

Apply spiderweb to wound.

BLOOD PURIFIER:

Dock roots are used extensively for purifying the blood.

Tea from cenizo plant; from joint fir; from sassafras.

BOILS:

Use poultice of prickly pear leaf. First bake and then split and apply to the boil while hot. This remedio has come to be so well known that even white rancheros use it on their kids.

To bring a boil to a head or draw out a splinter, tie a strip of fat bacon over the boil or the head of the splinter.

BROKEN BONES:

See Roy Jackson's remedio, page 23, *ante.*

BUNIONS:

Tie a piece of fat salt pork on the bunion, putting a fresh piece on every night for a week.

BURNS: See Charles Goodnight's salve, page 19, *ante.*

If you will rub the white of an egg over the burned parts, it will heal the burn and will not leave a scar.

CATARACT:

Grind up egg shells into almost a powder and sprinkle them in the eye.

CATHARTIC:

The seeds of the bull nettle are rich in an oil utilized in medicine as a cathartic.

The seeds of the castor oil plant are rich in an oil that is widely utilized in medicine as a cathartic commonly sold as castor oil. The medical importance of this plant dates from 1764, when a physician of the West Indies, Peter Cavone, published a paper on its properties.

CHAPPED HANDS:

Buffalo tallow.

Apply beef tallow or mutton suet. Rub well into skin. Do not wash until healed.

CHILLS:

Wear nutmeg on string around neck.

CHILLS AND FEVER:

Steep a teaspoonful of the white inside bark of the Mexican persimmon in about six cupfuls of water and drink.

Indians used tea from the roots of the squaw-weed, or frost-weed, for relieving cramps, as well as for chills and fever.

See "Judas tree," page 15, *ante*.

COLDS:

For colds and croup goat tallow is a good remedy.

The Indians used a decoction of the leaves of the horehound to cure colds.

Red chili peppers, swallowed whole like pills.

Drink tea made from broom weeds.

Wrap a wet cloth around neck, then a dry cloth over the wet cloth, before going to bed. Sure cure.

"Who in the hell would want a better remedy for colds than whiskey?"—Governor O. M. Roberts.

COLDS AND CATARRH:

A tea made from the leaves of the mullein is used in the treatment of colds and catarrh. The leaves are gathered when the plant is in bloom.

Tea of the common horehound.

COLIC:

Take teaspoonful of soot in a cloth, pour over three tablespoonfuls of hot water, let steep a few minutes. Give baby teaspoonful every half hour.

The Mexicans prepared an emetic for colic by brewing the leaves of the black brush *(Flourensia cernua)*.

Three tablespoons of asafoetida poured into one quart of whiskey, shake bottle well. One tablespoonful for children. For adults, use your own judgment.

COUGHS:

Berry of the anacahuita *(Cordia boissieri)* boiled and taken internally; dose, one cup.

The *gordolobo* boiled and taken at bed time; dose, one cup.

CROUP:

Use flannel cloth saturated with lard, kerosene and turpentine; apply to chest.

Boil or steam the leaves of horehound, draw off the water and make a syrup by adding sugar or farm-syrup, but preferably rock candy.

Mullein leaves are a very effective remedy for croup. Prepare by pouring hot water over the leaves, let steam for a few minutes, then draw off and sweeten a little.

See Tom Short's skunk fat remedio, page 27, *ante*.

CUTS:

If a boy has a scratch or cut and will let his pet dog lick the hurt place, this will cure the sore.

Immerse in kerosene oil or in mud.

The sweet milky juice of the milkweed is used as a lotion for cuts and sores.

CRAMPS:

Turn your shoes upside down under the bed.

DIABETES:

Drink plentifully of a tea brewed from the branches and leaves of the *palo verde,* or *retama (Parkinsonia aculeata),* or the flowers, if in bloom. The elimination of sugar from the blood by the use of this tea has also made possible and successful many an operation that otherwise would have proven fatal. No special diet is used with this tea.

DIARRHOEA:

See *Dysentery.*

Drink tea from red-root *(Krameria canescens),* which grows in Southwest Texas, or from the inside bark of a live oak, black jack, or cherry tree.

A solution of the gum of the mesquite may be used in checking diarrhoea of children. The leaves dried and made into a tea are also used.

To check diarrhoea the Indians used a decoction of the leaves of horehound.

DOG BITE:

"The hair of a dog is good for its bite."

Axle grease is also good.

DROPSY:

One beef gall to one quart of whiskey shaken well together; drink a swallow three times a day half hour before eating.

DYSENTERY:

See *Diarrhoea,* also *Tropical Dysentery.*

To check diarrhoea or dysentery, brown a teaspoonful of flour, add milk, and boil until the mixture is smooth, then drink.

Take the pink bark of a live oak tree; cook half an hour. Then take a tablespoonful every half hour until easy.

A tea made from the leaves of mullein *(Verbascum thopsus).*

Apply the white of an egg on the abdomen. Also feed the baby the white of an egg.

Soak white writing paper in glass of water; then drink water.

EARACHE:

Melt the grub of a dirt dauber in a spoon and pour the oil into the ear. The grub turns into a fine clear oil.

The juice of a daisy dropped into the ear was thought to cure earache.

One time when I was a kid I had the earache awful bad. My mother held my head to one side and dropped a drop of cold water in the ear. I jumped three feet high when it hit, but I've never had the earache since.

Thin out a piece of cotton and fill it with black pepper. Make a small ball of it and put in the ear.

Tobacco smoke blown into the ear was a cure for earache.

ERYSIPELAS:

Poultice made of beets mixed with fresh-cut chewing tobacco.

FAINT:

Hold an onion to the nose of a fainted person. This remedy was known to and prescribed by ten or fifteen Mexican school children between the ages of seven and nine.

FELON:

Applications of turpentine and gunpowder.

When in the woods, put a small amount of your excrement on a rag and wrap around the finger as a poultice. This is never failing cure.

Strong lye soap and tobacco boiled together. Thicken with cornmeal. To be used as a poultice.

FEVER:

If a person has fever and is sick enough to be in bed, put some black feathers in a pan and burn them under the bed.

Plant sunflowers around the house as a preventive.

Borraja (borage) with lemon juice boiled and taken internally; dose, one cup at bed time, together with a foot bath in lukewarm water.

The bark of the roots of the dogwood is used to some extent as a substitute for quinine.

The mountain pink was one of the most dependable fever medicines known to the early settlers; it was collected under the name of quinine plant. The plants are collected while still in blossom, dried in the air, then soaked in good brandy, and a tablespoonful given the patient three times daily.

FEVER BLISTER:

When you think there is a fever blister coming on your lip, rub behind your ear and rub on your lip. Do this three times in succession.

Put your little finger in your ear and get a little ear wax. Rub this on the blister.

FLUX:

The *sempual* boiled; dose, one cup at a time until relieved.

FRECKLES:

Wash the skin in buttermilk every day.

Slice raw cucumbers and rub on the face.

The very nicest old lady you ever saw admitted that my cures for freckles (buttermilk and cucumbers) were pretty good, but said that the very best cure was urine. It must have been effective because she certainly didn't look as if she had ever had a freckle.

FRIGHT:

El Yerbanís (a weed), boiled and taken for nine days; dose, one cup.

FROST BITE:

Scrape a raw Irish potato and apply to parts affected.

Soak in cold water.

GALL-STONES:

A tea made from the fruit of the prickly pear is said to be a cure for gall-stones.

GASEOUS PAINS:

The *mejorano,* or shrubby sage *(Salvia ballotaeflora),* with peppermint, boiled; dose, one cup any time.

GENERAL ILLNESS:

I had a small sister who was pretty sick. Three doctors had given her up. My father got on his horse and rode up the canyon to see an old woman and told her to come and look at my sister. It was about three o'clock in the morning, and this woman came and looked at my sister, and said that she could cure her. She got some bull nettles and made a tea from them and fed it to my sister hot. My sister started sweating right away and in a day or two she was all right.

GUNSHOT WOUND:

See W. W. Collier, page 19, *ante.*

Apply cold wet cloth or cold water. Best remedy known in early days.

HAIR TONIC:

One of the best hair tonics is to boil, and wash the head with sotol *(Dasylirion texanum)*. It will just make hair grow where there ain't no hair.

HEADACHE:

Paste a leaf of cottonwood on each temple and leave it there until it falls off, taking the skin with it, and the patient will never be bothered again with this trouble.

Put mustard plaster on back of neck, and one under each foot; let them stay on five minutes and remove.

The Mexican *vaquero* often puts fresh mesquite leaves in his hat and wears it. Remedio is used by some white men. Mistletoe leaves chewed will also relieve headache.

HEADACHE AND SUNSTROKE:

Hang a rattlesnake rattle in the crown of your sombrero.

HEMORRHAGE OF THE WOMB:

Boil *romero* (a Mexican shrub) and add three cracked pecans; dose, one cup at the time until relieved.

A pinch of alum under the tongue.

Tea of dried dewberry roots.

HICCOUGHS:

Take ten swallows of water without drawing a breath.

Have somebody pull out your tongue hard until your mouth bleeds a little. This will stop it sure. I lost fifteen pounds once from the hiccoughs, and they pulled out my tongue till it hurt pretty bad, and I haven't had the hiccoughs since.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE:

Make a tea of green pecan tree leaves. Drink a glass every day.

HIVES:

Make a tea of sheep manure; give liberal quantities, while warm.

INDIGESTION:

Eat the dried lining of a chicken gizzard.

INSECT BITE OR STING:

When I was a little fellow my father told me that the Florida Indians mashed the leaves of any kind of vegetation and applied to the bite. I have cured myself of many wasp, yellow-jacket and bumblebee stings with this simple and easily found remedy.

Apply common table soda moistened.

Apply a chew of tobacco fresh out of mouth.

Mud is excellent.

INTERNAL INJURIES:

For internal bruises boil the bark of the huisache tree; take before breakfast and at bedtime.

KIDNEY TROUBLE:

Asparagus is the finest thing in the world for kidney trouble.

Tea from the joint fir.

Rabanos con azucar cande (radishes with rock candy), eaten for several days.

LABOR PAINS:

Boil a gold ring and drink the tea from it after it has cooled by the early morning dew settling on it.

Hold the edge of a sharp axe against the patient's abdomen. This gets their mind off their trouble and eases their pains.

Let the patient hold tightly an ordinary comb in each hand, the edge of the teeth against the palm of the hand.

An old remedy for labor pains was what was technically known as "quilling." This consisted in having the woman in labor blow through a turkey quill as hard as she could.

LINIMENT:

Take two parts of pure coal oil, add to it three or four cubes of camphor gum. Add then, if you have it, one part of melted buffalo tallow. If you don't have buffalo tallow use one part of olive oil. This liniment is good for more things than any remedy I've ever tried and every household should have it.

LOCKJAW: See cockroach tea, page 15, *ante.*

LUNACY:

The buttercup plant was applied to the neck in the wane of the moon.

LUNG TROUBLE:

El palo mulato boiled and taken in cup doses any time.

Prepare *berro* (watercress) like a salad and eat in big quantity.

MALARIA:

Slice a lemon-rind, seeds and all—and boil in a cup of water until there's about a cup of pulp left. Let it set all night and eat in the morning before breakfast. Repeat this for three days. My mother used this for ordinary colds as wells as malaria.

MEASLES:

Plenty of cold water and lemonade.

While I was attending medical school, the professor gave his regular lecture on measles, which concluded with suggestions as to treatment. An old gentleman was sitting next to me, a doctor from East Texas, who had dropped in just to hear the lecture. He leaned over and whispered that the professor had omitted the very best cure for measles. I asked him what it was and he replied a tea made from sheep dung; he said he used it in every case of measles that he had and that it never failed. The remedio is also excellent fertilizer for any sort of vegetation.

MEMBRANEOUS CROUP:

A very effective remedy is to give child one teaspoonful of pure wine of ipecac to cause vomiting. Repeat does as often as necessary.

MOUTH WASH:

The best thing to tighten the teeth and harden the gums is tea made from oak bark.

MAL DE OJO (Evil Eye):

The witch or wizard must take water in his mouth and hold it there until it becomes warm, then moisten his hand with it

and rub the affected parts and the head of the victim and then some piece of his clothing, such as a pocket handkerchief, or a coat, and wrap it around the victim.

NAUSEA:

Cured by drinking the broth made from boiling the linings of chicken gizzards.

NAIL IN THE FOOT:

Put a lot of Epsom salts in hot water and put the foot in it and keep it there.

Scrape a raw beet and make poultice. Apply to wound.

Soak foot in kerosene oil.

Hold foot in hot ashes.

Smoke wound with woolen rags.

I heard a good way the other day to cure a nail in the foot. A very intelligent—yea, an intellectual lady here—a lady from "Missoppi"—a lady of quality who boasted much of the ante-bellum prominence of her family—a lady who had "been to college"—had a little boy who "stuck a nail in his foot." She pulled the nail out and greased it—the nail—and then put the nail in the fire. A neighbor lady asked what she did that for. Her answer was, "That foot will never even get sore now." I was telling another lady about it and she says, "Well, that is so. Our oldest child stuck a nail in its foot so bad that her father had to put his foot on the plank and hold it down while he pulled the foot loose. I got that nail out of the plank and greased it and put it into the fire and the foot got well right away." Now, some folks would think they should doctor the foot. But no. The idea is this: The nail is the thing that did the damage and it should be punished—hence the burning. But why they grease it first is beyond my poor powers.

NERVOUSNESS:

Boil *polillo* (a little running vine with a yellow flower) and drink like tea.

NOSE BLEED:

A very effective preventative for this affliction is to take a lead bullet from a pistol, hammer it out into a thin sheet, then roll this sheet of lead around a strong cord, and wear it around the neck.

Place a brown cigarette paper in the roof of your mouth, or hang a butcher knife down your back. I always hang a butcher knife down my back when I have a nose bleed.

Put a nickel in the roof of your mouth and hold it up with your tongue, and at the same time hold your hands high up in the air.

Stand with your back to a mulberry tree. Measure your height and then bore a hole in the tree. Cut a lock of your hair, put it in the hole, and drive a rusty nail in it. Your nose will never bleed again.

Wear wool thread around big toe.

Wear a blue bead on a single thread around the neck.

PAIN:

If you are out walking and get a pain in your side, pick up a rock, spit on the side of it that lay next to the ground, and place the rock back as it was when you picked it up; the pain will disappear.

PAINS IN HEART:

El toronjil Mexicana (sweet lemon), boiled and taken internally any time.

PARASITES:

The powdered seeds and leaves of the larkspur are used in remedies for external parasites.

PILES:

Buffalo tallow mixed with salt.

Carry a buckeye in pocket at all times.

PNEUMONIA:

See page 16, *ante.*

Cook onions, thicken with cornmeal, and place over the lungs while warm.

Fry sliced onions with rye flour and make a poultice of it for the chest and lungs. My mother cured my brother of pneumonia with this remedy when the doctor had given him up.

POULTICE:

A prickly pear poultice will draw anything out—thorns, splinters, boils, anything. Put it on hot and leave it.

The best drawing poultice is a tumble-bug poultice. It will draw the bucket out of the well. Just mash them up and put them on raw.

POISON OAK:

Rub affected parts with pure apple vinegar.

Use strong salt water and a sponge.

Nightshade berries mixed with cream will cure poison oak.

Tea from the iron weed, from gum plant, and other varieties of the aster family.

Tie an ordinary fishing sinker around your neck on a string; it will ward off poison oak, and it will cure it if you have already become infected. A pocketful of cartridges will do the same things; the lead in the cartridges does the work.

PREVENTIVE FOR DISEASE IN GENERAL:

Punch a hole in dime, put a string through it and wear around ankle and you will never be sick.

Put a lump of asafoetida in cloth, tie and suspend from neck with string.

The vertebrae of a salmon, strung upon a string and worn around the neck will prevent the contraction of disease. (Actually practiced by the Mexicans.)

A scapular will ward off all diseases and prevent evil things from happening. (Actually practiced by the Mexican Catholics.)

If you wear a buckeye or carry one you will never have a disease.

PULLING TEETH:

Put your tooth when pulled in a crack; if you don't you will have a crooked tooth.

If you pull a tooth and throw it away and then a dog steps on it, a dog's tooth will come in where it has been pulled out.

RATTLESNAKE BITE:

Chickens are good if you can get them. Just kill a chicken and tear it open and put it over the bite, and in a few minutes the chicken will be all green. Some people cut the chicken open while still alive. It takes about a dozen chickens to get all the poison out.

In the absence of chickens bury the limb bitten in the ground and soak earth covering it with sweet milk.

Use coal oil freely. If bite is on limb, submerge it in the liquid. I once saw a boy a few minutes after he was bitten on the instep. Several poultices of the old-time worm medicine "Cresylic Ointment" were put on the wound and the next morning the kid got up, put on his boots and went on the drive with us.

Apply mixture of turpentine and gunpowder.

Use kerosene well applied to the wound immediately after the bite and open wound with knife.

The Texas milkweed *(Asclepias texana)* is said to be an Indian antidote for rattlesnake bites. Mr. Chris Herms, living near Boerne, Texas, relates the following incident: An Indian chief and five Indians were asking for food at one of the ranch homes. While eating, a member of the family rushed in to tell that one of the party had been snake-bitten, and was too ill to be moved. The chief, on learning the cause of the excitement, made a few motions to his men and they hurriedly scattered in every direction. In a short time, one of them returned with roots of the Texas milkweed. This they mashed and applied to the wound, while giving the patient half of it internally. The man became well in an unreasonably short time.

"The cockle-burr is a valuable plant for rattlesnake bites. In an emergency, the leaves are beaten to a pulp and applied as a poultice to the wound. A tea is made of the green fruit or leaves, by brewing a cup of mashed material with three cups of water. One teaspoonful of tea will cause severe vomiting and relieve the stomach of the venom. This dose is repeated until the black fluid ceases to come from the stomach."—Ellen D. Schulz, *Texas Wild Flowers.*

Mr. V. L. Cory, Range Botanist, Sonora, Texas, makes the following statement: *"Euphorbia prostrata* is a name under which a large number of the prostrata forms of Spurge are hidden. There are six or eight varieties of this plant known to me and I agree with the modern botanist in placing this group in the general *Chamaesyce.* They are all very similar, lying flat on the ground and have the common characteristic, a milk-like acrid juice. Generally this juice is utilized by the Mexicans and many white people in Southwest Texas as a cure for snake bite and for all manner of skin diseases."

"*Calophanes linearis*—(Snake plant) of Northern Mexico and the lower Rio Grande—is used extensively by the Mexicans as an antidote for snake bites."—J. M. Coulter, *Botany of Western Texas.*

Golondrina (Chamaesyce, or Spurge) is another remedy for rattlesnake bites.

Every Mexican state boasts of certain number of *Yerbas de la vibora,* for the wonderful powers of which everybody seems willing and anxious to vouch. In a region where venomous creatures are so common, it does not seem improbable that nature has provided vegetable antidotes against their poison. One of the best known antidotes is the snake-plant of Northern Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley—a common herb of the acanthus family. According to one writer, every man among the Mexican troops stationed along the Rio Grande carried, by orders, a small package of this plant in his pocket, while the officers were most emphatic in their assurance of its efficacy. The same authority says that some of the Mexicans would, for a dollar, if allowed to use this antidote, cause rattlesnakes to bite them.

Years ago the remuda man on a brush country ranch was sent out one evening to hobble the night horses. While he was stooping down to put the hobbles on one of them, a rattlesnake bit him on the hand; the horse became frightened, reared up, and when he came down, stepped on the rattlesnake's head, holding him fast. The man immediately cut the snake's head off, then cut the snake's body into pieces about three inches long, splitting same open and applying to the wound. The hand did not swell, nor did he have any bad effects of any kind. He did not miss a day's work.

Take any kind of fowl, rabbit, etc., tear open and apply to bite while warm. Do this several times.

Scarify the wound with a sharp knife and suck the blood and poison from the wound, and spit it out quick and wash the mouth. Anybody with bad teeth cannot do this, though, as it is dangerous. Stick Spanish daggers in the flesh around the wound. If bite is on leg or arm, bandage tightly above the bite to keep the poison from going all over the system.

See page 17, also "Rattlesnake bite" under "Animals."

For fear that some persons may take too seriously folk treatments for rattlesnake bite, I want to remind them that

Colonel M. L. Crimmins and Doctor Dudley Jackson, both of San Antonio, experimented on eighty-three dogs, first injecting venom and then applying folk cures without finding any folk cure to be of value.

RHEUMATISM:

Carry an Irish potato in your pocket.

Teaspoonful common table soda three times a day taken in half a glass of water.

An ointment made from the poke-berry is used in the treatment of rheumatism.

If one is troubled with rheumatism, all that is necessary to get rid of it is to carry a buckeye about.

Nothing can beat rattlesnake oil.

Wear paper sack around neck.

Wear rattles of rattlesnake or carry them in pocket.

If you get some dirt out of the graveyard and walk over it for ten nights you will be cured of rheumatism.

There are certain kinds of rings that people wear for rheumatism. They resemble gold and have a silver looking set in the middle. Mrs. Betty Miller, Pineland, wears these rings and she says if she pulls them off her finger her rheumatism becomes almost unbearable.

A neighbor of mine bought two rather costly rings of lead or some base metal. He said they helped his rheumatism.

Sleeping with a pelon (Chihuahua) dog is infallible. See page 13, *ante*.

RINGWORM:

Rub the root of rain lily on the ringworm.

Apply ointment made from the poke-berry.

Use an egg shell for measuring cup. Take one measure of the following ingredients: beaten egg yolks, turpentine, coal oil, vinegar and salt. This is also good for stings, bites, rheumatism and as a rubbing liniment, for man as well as beast.

Apply wet gunpowder three times daily for four or five days.

ROPE-BURNED HANDS:

Wash with cowboy urine.

ROTTEN TEETH:

Pick the teeth which are rotten with a dried chile [penis] of a coyote. The Mexicans are great believers in this and say that after it has been given a few treatments the affected tooth soon falls out.

SICK STOMACH:

Mash twelve green peach leaves, pour half cup boiling water over them, boil ten minutes. Take a teaspoonful every half hour until easy.

SKIN DISEASES:

During the Civil War, the southern people are said to have used a tea made of the berries and bark of the yaupon, or holly, in the treatment of ulcers and skin diseases.

Make a salve out of dock roots and it will cure ring-worm, tetter, or any kind of skin disease.

SKUNK BITE:

Put salt on the wound. When this remedy failed the resulting mortality was attributed to an *"aire en el corazon"* (air in the heart).

Mad stones are the best cure for hydrophobia skunk bites. Some mad stones come from the bottom of sailing vessels, but the best mad stones come out of the stomachs of white deer. Boil stone in sweet milk, apply to wound, and leave until the stone falls away. See letter from Walter Negley, page 24, *ante*. See page 17, *ante*.

SMALLPOX:

Wear a string of snake rattlers around your neck to prevent smallpox.

SUFFOCATING PAINS:

Ginger root with laurel leaves boiled and taken in doses of one cup at any time.

SORES:

The *armagoso* weed chopped and applied on sores.

The *golondrina* (vine that runs on the ground) is boiled and used externally as a wash for bad sores.

SORE EYES:

Mash mulberry leaves and make into a tea. Bathe the eyes.

Bathe the eyes and head with cold water night and morning and bathe the feet at night in cold water.

Use no water about the face and eyes.

I have frequently seen Mexican *vaqueros* wash sore eyes with urine the first thing in the morning.

The juice of the berries of the purple nightshade was used for treating inflamed eyes.

My younger sister was troubled with sore eyes when she was a girl. My grandmother told her to take a pail and walk down to the stream near the house, and not say a word to anyone on the way down or back, and to dip the water from the running stream *with* the current and not against it. My sister did this, and then my grandmother bathed her eyes with the water and in a short time all the soreness had disappeared.

It is said that inflammation of the eyes is relieved by the use of salve made from the poke-berry. The roots that are used for this salve are gathered in the fall and, on account of their large size, are sliced before drying.

SORE THROAT:

Wear a necklace made of limes.

Gargle with solution made from boiling root of *agarita* bush *(Berberis trifoliolata)*.

Make sliced tomatoes into a bandage and tie around the throat.

Upon retiring at night, tie your sock or stocking around the throat.

STAMMERING:

To cure stammering, get child near animal that is being butchered—hog, cow, anything,—and as soon as the lights are cut out rub them vigorously in child's face, particularly about the mouth.

STIFF JOINTS:

Last summer I broke my ankle, and since then it has been stiff. One of the Mexicans on the ranch told me the best thing for it was to go out west along the Rio Grande, and kill a mountain lion; then take the suet from its kidneys and make an oil.

He said that rubbing the ankle very lightly with this oil would limber it up, but he said to be careful and not rub too hard or the ankle would get too limber.

Rattlesnake oil is a fine limberer.

STILL-BIRTH:

To prevent still-birth, get all the children in the neighborhood to beat tin pans in the sick room—to drive the devil away.

STOMACH ACHE:

A tonic tea made from the foliage of creosote bush, or greasewood *(Larrea mexicana)*, will cure stomach ache.

STONES IN BLADDER:

Get some branches from the creosote, or greasewood, which has an odor similar to that of iodoform, and boil until a strong tea is made. Then have the patient drink a copious draught and relief will come immediately.

STRYCHNINE:

See Goodnight remedy, page 19, *ante*.

STYE:

Rub the stye with a gold wedding ring, then look through the ring.

Rub tail of a black cat over stye.

Get up early some morning before any one else is astir, and go to a street crossing, or where the road forks, say these magic words, and stye will leave:

> "Stye, stye, pray leave my eye
> And catch the first person that passes by."

One must not look at this spot again until he is positive that some one else has passed there.

SUNSTROKE:

See *Headache and Sunstroke.*

SWELLING:

Good brandy, soft soap and salt. Mix together, OINT the part affected and rub down thoroughly once or twice a day.

TAPE WORM:

Give patient ground glass. It will cut the tape worm up.

TEARS:

To prevent tears while peeling onions, hold in mouth a darning needle that has been dipped in kerosene oil.

TEETHING BABIES:

See Gallie Bogel, page 24, *ante.*

If the baby is fretful when teething, string three large snake rattles on a red cord, put around child's neck, and do not remove until it is through teething.

The vertebrae of a salmon, strung upon a string and worn around the neck will help a baby through the teething period.

A rattlesnake rattle in a tobacco-bag hung around the child's neck.

Let baby chew rattlesnake rattles, or if they are not handy, six-shooter cartridges.

THIRST:

See C. Goodnight, page 18, *ante.*

THRUSH:

If a child has thrush, let a seventh son blow three times in its mouth before sundown and before sunup. I have seen this remedy work.

TONIC:

Dried pomegranate blossoms made into a tea.

Tea of buckthorn *(Rhamnus purshiana).*

TONSILITIS:

Take the inner bark of a live oak tree and boil until a dark brown color is attained. Then cool and gargle three times daily. This is a very astringent but harmless gargle and will certainly "knock out" tonsilitis. This remedy almost saved my life once.

TOOTHACHE:

Tobacco was a sovereign remedy for toothache.

See Pete Anderwald, page 17, *ante.*

A decoction made of the root of the *agarita,* or wild currant *(Berberis trifoliolata).*

Indian tribes are supposed to have chewed the leaves of mistletoe to relieve toothache.

Chew the bark from a prickly ash bush. The bush is found all over South and West Texas; it is often called "tickle-tongue."

See *Rotten Teeth.*

TROPICAL DYSENTERY:

See *Dysentery.*

The bark and leaves of the goatbush, or *chaparral amargoso,* are very bitter and a tea made from either is almost a sure cure for tropical dysentery.

TUBERCULOSIS:

The flowers of the broomweed are gathered and dried and made into a syrup, which is especially good for tuberculosis, if the stomach will retain the syrup.

TUMORS:

The flowers of the elder-berry have a medicinal value when dried carefully in the shade, being used in the form of a poultice for the treatment of tumors and similar afflictions.

VENEREAL DISEASES:

The wax plant, or *candelilla,* is said to be much used in Mexico as a remedy for venereal diseases. The plant has purgative properties.

WARTS:[1]

Apply concentrated lye with point of needle. Follow this by rag saturated in vinegar.

Take a broom straw and break it at the joint and rub it on the wart.

Stick a pin through the wart and burn the end of the pin.

Put milk-weed on them.

Rub your wart with a wedding ring.

Let someone take a match and rub it over the wart until the match smokes. When the match smokes, let the person take the

[1]Most of these wart cures have been taken from the collection of the late Richard Harrison.

match and hide it. If the one who has the warts ever finds out where the match is, the warts will return.

Go to the cemetery at midnight and find a dead cat; go to the grave of a friend. Stand on it and rub the cat across the wart.

When the moon is full, pull up a green weed—"It matters not what kind of weed, so it is green," said the old Mexican to me—rub wart with the weed, then cast the weed away without looking at it.

One way to take warts off is to find an old stump hole with water in it. Bathe the warts in this water.

Warts are cured by taking two sticks and rubbing them over the warts. Take these sticks down to the forks of the road, and put them down in the form of a cross. Do not look back at them after you have started away.

Carry Irish potato in pocket; also rub with potato, put potato away, and when potato rots wart will disappear.

Get some one to count your warts and they will leave you and the one who counts them will get them.

If you have warts on your hand, put in a box a pebble for each wart, wrap the box in paper and place it in some conspicuous place where someone is sure to pick it up. The person who picks it up will have warts and yours will disappear.

Stick a pin in wart, wrap pin in a shuck, put shuck in road; first person that steps on shuck will get the wart transferred to him.

Some people chant them off; some have power to remove them by touching or rubbing them.

Cut a small limb from a peach tree and cut as many notches in the limb as you have warts. Then touch each wart with a notch. Then bury the limb under a peach tree and when the limb rots the warts will disappear.

Take a leaf from a string bean vine, and rub the wart until it is green. Then hide the leaf.

Take a piece of string and tie as many knots in it as you have warts. Then swallow the string.

Warts are cured by picking up a bone off the ground and rubbing it on the warts. Then throw the bone backwards as far as you can. Do not look back at the bone; if you do, the warts will not come off.

Go out into the woods and walk and walk until you find the bone of some dead animal. Take this bone up carefully, rub

the wart with the part of the bone that was on the ground. Dig a hole in the ground and bury the bone. When the bone decays the wart will disappear.

Rub with butter or navy bean and throw over your left shoulder.

Rub wart with smooth stone, then hurl stone, without looking at it, over left shoulder.

Take a grain of corn and pick the wart until it bleeds. Then give it to any old black hen.

Pick the wart until it bleeds, then rub the blood on a small smooth rock and tie the rock up in a nice little package and drop it in the road. The person that picks up the package will get the wart.

To cure warts, steal a dishrag, and bury it without anyone seeing you.

Rub with a stolen dishrag, then bury the rag behind the barn. When the rag decays the wart will be gone.

Bathe warts with vinegar.

See remedies suggested by Mrs. Roney and Peggy Prassel, page 21, *ante*.

WHOOPING COUGH:

One drop of Belladona on sugar three times a day.

A drug made from the buttercup, or evening primrose, is used as a remedy for whooping cough.

WORMS—STOMACH:

Jerusalem oak.

WOUNDS:

Dr. Charlie Campbell, who spent his boyhood among the Apaches in Arizona, states that on one occasion he saw the medicine man of an Apache tribe stand his warriors in a line and dig a little wax out of each warrior's ear. This he made into a ball. Dr. Campbell said the ball grew to about the size of a baseball, and this material was used to treat wounds and infections. Dr. Campbell said that it was absolutely practical.

An ointment made from the fat of a dead Indian.

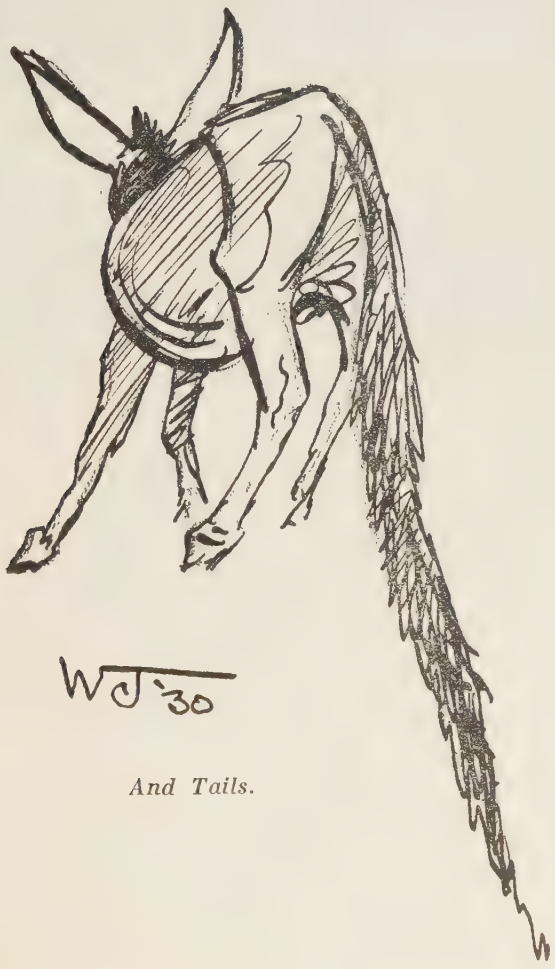
The Indians used to heal wounds by treating the implements with which they were made. The man who accidentally cut

his foot while chopping a tree was expected to recover rapidly when the axe was coated with a healing salve and swathed in bandages.

YELLOW JAUNDICE:

A tea made from the bark or leaves of the goatbush, or *chaparral amargoso,* is a cure for yellow jaundice.

El cenizo (Leucophyllum texanum) boiled. Bathe with tea and also take internally.



And Tails.

NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA FOLK CURES

By Walter R. Smith

Northwestern Oklahoma was settled by people from everywhere, and they came into the country at a comparatively recent date. Although the Cheyenne-Arapahoe country was opened in 1892 and the Cherokee "Strip" in 1893, neither "run" penetrated very deeply into the region lying out toward the Panhandle and between the South Canadian and the Cimarron rivers. Growing land hunger and the discovery that in this formerly neglected section agriculture, though uncertain, was possible resulted in settlement about 1900 by people from as widely separated locations as Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Nebraska, and Georgia. The greater percentage of settlers, however, came from Kansas, Missouri, and Texas. From the open range the country changed in what was to me a disgustingly short time into a farming section, to the casual observer not unlike the Texas Panhandle or southwestern Kansas. But the conditions of settlement and the nature of those people who in 1900, 1901, and 1902 "filed on" their prairie claims gave the country a certain distinctiveness, a flavor that smacks of everywhere.

Poor in goods as were the people who came in to establish homes, they were rich in resourcefulness. They brought with them their own peculiar customs and habits, superstitions and lore—knowledge not gained from books or schools, but born of experience, real or imagined, or handed down from parents as hardy and resourceful as themselves. The folk-lore of a people so gathered together would exhibit extraordinary variety and richness. Excepting the folk-lore of the Cheyenne Indians, all that is distinctively local in the folk-lore of this section is a result of the blending of the imported lore which became the common property of the country. Variety is still the chief characteristic. But while today traces of this local blend are found, it is generally possible to trace any given bit of lore to a source outside the state. Conditions have not favored the growth of a distinctively local lore. Modern means of transportation and communication followed soon after settlement and

broke down the isolation which might have fostered the formation of a distinct folk. Indeed, the isolation did not last long enough to effect a blend of the diverse forms of folk-lore that had been brought together. Often there is no blend, and antagonistic views exist side by side, each with enough support to insure its existence well into the future.

Nothing in the folk-lore of this section is more interesting than its folk cures, because nothing else in it was more significant, more vital to its people. Today the average person can hardly appreciate the importance that home cures held in the lives of pioneer settlers. The settler was on his own resources, and in sickness he knew he must depend upon himself or his neighbor, who, sympathetic as he—or she—always was, possessed only traditional—not scientific—knowledge. The settlers cared for their own sick before doctors came into the country; and when doctors did begin to locate in the few "railroad towns" in the country, the people were for physical, financial, and psychological reasons slow to call for their assistance. In the first place, people who lived in dugouts or sod houses, ate beans and beef, drank black coffee and "gyp" water, and worked outdoors rain or shine were hardy. In the second place, they had no money. Finally, the tendency to distrust doctors was not rare.

The doctor's medicine was sometimes credited with the death of this or that person, and mothers especially preferred some old woman's milder, safer remedy, which, while it might not cure, could do no harm. "I was born in a sod house when my father was away on a trip to the railroad," an old-timer said to me. "A neighbor woman came in. So mother wasn't alone. That was in Kansas. I've lived in new country all my life. Mother raised all her children because she knew how to doctor them. We was sick some, but there wasn't ever a doctor in our house. I don't ever expect to need a doctor. And when I do die, I don't want any fancy operations, hospitals, or high educated doctors with a diploma to cut on me or give medicine I don't know anything about." Others could be found to express the same sentiments.

Knowledge is power only when practical use can be made of it, and the more farsighted settlers brought with them materials, the use of which as medicine they understood. The material for this or that remedy was always freely shared with those in

need. Pay was seldom offered and never taken. The first visitor we had after we had pitched our tent on our "claim" was looking for red clover honey to make a remedy for his wife's sore throat. Mother had what she though *might* be red clover honey. He said it *looked* like red clover honey and took some of it. I presume the cure must have worked, for we lived neighbors for years and I do not recall having heard of another sore throat in that family. Until this day there are growing on the homestead where I grew up many a strange shrub and plant whose presence can be accounted for in no way except for their beneficial influence, real or supposed, upon some ailment of man or domestic animal. And my father was only one of many who exercised such foresight. A good supply of catnip made a woman the patron of mothers for miles about, and I have known people to come from considerable distance to borrow a weasel skin which one family had brought from northern Missouri. It was an infallible cure for swellings of all sorts. The skin was soaked in hot sweet milk and applied *flesh side down* as hot at is could be borne. The number of times the skin was used to the satisfaction of the user would indicate that use increased rather than decreased its potency.

The most numerous of folk cures I have found are cures for boils. But if there is considerable difference of opinion as to the best remedy for them, there is almost a unanimous agreement as to the cause of boils. They arise from bad blood and are nature's method of allowing the poison to escape from the system. If a boil does not come to a *head* and *open,* it will appear somewhere else. Treatments, then, have pretty generally the same object. The boil must be drawn to a head to have it over with. Since there is a tendency to class as boils a good many troubles which are really not, most people profess to have experienced them. Simile and metaphor have grown from this experience. A person speaks in terms which will be understood when he describes his muscles, sprained ankle, or ingrown nail as "sore as a boil." A grouchy person acts as if he "had a boil," or an annoying person may be called a "boil."

The common treatment for boils is lancing after drawing to a head with a poultice. These poultices are made of a great variety of materials. Flaxseed meal, prickly pear cactus, bread and milk, fat meat, yellow of an egg and salt, soap and sugar,

and cow manure are suggestive of the range of poultice material. The strength of the soap and sugar poultice depends upon the kind and strength of the soap used. The home-made soap made from the lye of wood ashes makes the strongest poultice. On account of its severity it is supposed to do its work rapidly. In general, the stronger the poultice is, the more pain it will cause, and the speedier will be the cure. Another severe poultice is the white of egg thickened with gunpowder. Somewhat less severe is a poultice of yellow of egg and salt. However, it is severe enough for most people. Another poultice of the courage-testing variety is made of the cambium layer of the bark of the "slippery" elm tree. As the poultice dries, the bark puckers and pulls at the boil, thus *drawing* it. Similar in action to this is the practice of placing the "lining of an egg shell" on a boil moist and allowing it to dry in place. The mechanical action of the membrane in drying draws the boil and works the cure.

We may relax as we go to the milder poultices made of flaxseed meal, bread and milk, fat meat, and prickly pear. This last poultice seems to have come into Oklahoma from Texas. It is said to be particularly mild and soothing in its action. The spines are burned off and the cactus beaten into a pulp and then applied to the boil. The fat meat, generally bacon, is cooked and then applied to the boil. Many people, however, demand that the meat be raw.

After a boil has been opened, a very ingenious method of finishing the cure is sometimes used. It is especially effective when the lancing of the boil has been done a little prematurely. The mouth of a bottle which has been heated by pouring hot, even boiling, water in it is placed over the *head* of the boil. The change in volume of the bottle due to expansion and contraction of the glass draws the boil. This process is often referred to as "cupping." It requires a stout heart.

Boils may be prevented by purifying the blood. Various methods of purification are in vogue. Eating raw raisins purifies the blood. Sarsaparilla tea helps also. Eating gunpowder or sulphur will prevent boils. But the boil prevention par excellence is lead shot. The orthodox dose is one shot for each boil the patient has ever had. A considerable number of shot is sometimes swallowed. I knew of one man's taking at one time all the shot from a twelve gauge shotgun shell. Long

after he had "taken" this cure, he said to me, 'I usta be bothered with boils all the time, but I ain't had one since." The theory is that the lead of the shot takes up or absorbs the poison, thus preventing its finding an escape from the system through a boil. The faith in boils as an agency for purifying the blood used frequently to be expressed by the statement that "every boil a person has is *worth five dollars.*"

An interesting appendicitis cure may as well follow. The man I got it from was cured by it in Southeast Missouri near the old town Cape Girardeau fifteen years ago. He and his brother both took appendicitis the same day and were told by their physician that an immediate operation was the only chance to save their lives. An old woman who "knew about" the cure came in, took charge, and cured them. The man said: "You take the morrer from a strong hog's jaw bone an' mix in enough gunpowder to make a thick paste an' put hit on the skin over where the pain is located at. Hit draws powerful. If you mix hit up in your hand, you can feel hit draw. In one night hit took the pain all out an' nex' mornin' you could see the streaks of pus hit had drawed out." The older the jaw bone is, the surer the cure is, for the value of the cure depends to a large extent on the age of the marrow. The marrow must be rancid or it will not "work."

This same man had an infallible dropsy cure. The cure was brought about by drinking water in which have stood ashes from burned grape vines. Wild grape vines were better than tame grape vines, and he expressed his idea that "them ole Missoury grape vines down in the bottoms are better'n these here little ole Oklahomy vines." The ashes were stirred into the water and allowed to settle until the water was almost clear, when it was drawn off and drunk. And I prefer this cure to another dropsy cure which I have heard of repeatedly but have never positively known to be used. It consists of frequent baths in greasy dishwater. After the bath is taken the patient must be wrapped in a woolen blanket and all possible grease allowed to "soak in."

Mumps can be greatly relieved by rubbing the jaws on a hog trough. I have never heard anyone advocate this as a preventive. It seems to be a relief measure only. Yet the argument I once heard put forth to prove its worth might indicate that it would prevent as well as cure. I was questioning a

man who I knew believed in the cure. He told me that his grandmother had watched the cure all her life and found that it was "as sure as any." His father and mother had the same experience, and he had not seen it fail. Then he added, "You know yourself that there must be something to it, for you never saw a hog have mumps."

No small part of the folk cures are kept secret. This is rarely because of selfish motives. I remember an old man who could cure thrush in babies. He did not have to be near the baby or even see it. Mothers would write to "Uncle Perry Fields" their babies' names and ages. The trouble would disappear about the time he should have received their letters. What he did he steadfastly refused to say. He went so far as to say that is was *in the Bible* and that if he took anything in payment, he would lose his power to *work* the cure. Many people could stop bleeding in as mysterious a manner. When called to *stop blood,* a person possessing this power usually went off by himself to do, say, or think whatever his particular formula required. It is difficult to get any information on how blood is stopped. One man claims to be able to teach a woman younger than he to stop blood, while his wife can teach a man younger than she the method. However, both show a reluctance too great to be overcome.

Seventh sons of seventh sons were credited with mysterious powers in healing anything and everything. Most of them worked charm cures and used medicines secretly compounded. I have wondered how many of these seventh sons were sincere. A great many of them did a profitable business. But, trusted as they were, the seventh sons of seventh sons had a worthy rival in any old woman who had raised to maturity children well in excess of the mystic number seven.

Most interesting to me of all the secretly prepared cures I ever met were what their originator called *hypopalorum* and *lopopahyrum.* The mystery which surrounded their preparation, the various surmises as to their preparation, and the interest people took in the problem of discovering that process made the cures appeal to me with a force which amounted to fascination. Both cures were teas of the bark of a tree. It was said that the same kind of bark was used for both and that the maker had said that he could make hypopalorum and lopopahyrum from the same identical tree! Hypopalorum

was a powerful cathartic which had been known to *unlock* locked bowels. Lopopahyrum was an equally strong emetic. While never definitely admitted by the maker, it was pretty generally believed that the bark for making hipopalorum was shaved downward while that for making lopopahyrum was shaved upward from the base of the tree toward the top! Whether the bark of white walnut (butternut), poplar (which the similarity in sound of the two cures suggested), cottonwood, willow, or some other tree was used, was a matter of much conjecture and, after the death of this old man, considerable experiment. But all efforts were of no avail. No one ever succeeded in producing the hypopalorum and lopopahyrum in their original potency. The hopelessness of the quest was well expressed by one woman who suggested that "Old Man Barnes" must have been a "seventh son," and she added that besides shaving the bark up or down there was no telling what else he had done.

Not a great many charm cures are found in northwestern Oklahoma. This may be accounted for in part by the very small percentage of negroes in this section. The negro's lore that has found its way into this section has been introduced almost entirely by the whites from the South. However, charm cures do exist. By charm cures I mean cures which make use of formula or ritual and which are taken on faith, the action of the treatment or the possibility of curative powers never being questioned. Charming off warts, stopping sties by rubbing with a gold wedding ring, or stopping blood by *tallying* are examples of what I mean by charm cures and may serve to indicate what my choice of a name fails to show. Warts, bleeding, rheumatism, and "fits" lend themselves most admirably to treatment by charm cures.

If a string that has as many knots tied in it as a person has warts is placed under the doorstep where the patient (who is ignorant of the proceeding) will pass in and out, the warts will all disappear. A variation of this is to tie the correct number of knots in a horsehair and let the person who has the warts carry it in his pocket until it is lost, when the warts will disappear. Warts may be "got shet of" by tying as many knots in a string as there are warts and then burning the string. If warts are rubbed with a bacon rind that has been stolen and the bacon rind hid under a stone, the warts will

disappear when the whole performance has been forgotten. Similar to this is the method of removing warts by rubbing them with the foot of a chicken that has been stolen. The foot is then buried and as soon as the foot rots, the warts will go away. I traced this cure to Texas, and the method of securing the material for it may indicate a negro origin. I leave that to the philosophers. Warts can be "bought off" a person by another person. Give a person anything of value for his warts and they will disappear. In this case the buyer seems only to have power of attorney, as the warts do not appear on him when they leave the former owner. Once when a boy complained that the warts he had "bought" did not leave his friend of whom he had purchased them, an old man asked if the purchaser had counted the warts, and on being told that he had not gave that as the reason. "You know," he said, "nobody would buy nothing without knowing how many of it he got."

Rheumatism may be guarded against by carrying a *buckeye* in the pocket. No buckeyes grow in northwest Oklahoma, but many buckeyes have been imported into Oklahoma by those who did not believe strongly enough in the idea that an Irish potato carried in the pocket until it petrified would protect the one who carried it against rheumatism. Wearing copper rings on the fingers or copper bands about wrist or ankle prevents rheumatism. A dime worn on a string about wrist or ankle has the same effect. Dimes are the best coins for this purpose because they are *nearest pure silver.*

"Fits" are doctored by charm cures extensively. A child who has fits can be cured by placing its bare feet into the opened body of a freshly-killed chicken. For best results the chicken should be cut open while it is alive and the child's feet put into it before the chicken is dead. The dying of the chicken while the afflicted child's feet are in its body seems to give power to the cure. The only attempt I ever knew to explain the action of the cure was the idea that the warmth of the chicken's body drew out the fits. Children who have fits may be cured by giving them a small pup to play with. The more the pup is with the child, the better. It should sleep with the child so it will "take the fits from the child." The pup invariably dies. One of the firmest believers in the old folk medicine that I know confided to me that this cure

cured him of fits. One morning his mother found his pup dead under his bed. That it had died in a fit was shown by the froth at its mouth. And that he was cured by the pup was proven by the fact that he never had another fit.

Rattlesnake rattles carried in the hatband will prevent the wearer from having headache, and a plum or cherry pit or a small pebble carried in the mouth acts against getting "over het" or taking sunstroke.

Essential to the success of a charm cure is faith in it. "According to your faith so be it unto you." If you do not believe in the cure, it will not be effective in your case; and you had better "try" something else.

Cold cures are legion. "Hog killing time" offers an opportunity for a person to rid himself of his cold. When a hog is cut open to remove the intestines, breathe deeply of the "animal smell" coming from the still-warm viscera. The cold will be broken up. Breathing the odor of skunk, while more objectionable to some people, is equally as effective. Skunk grease rubbed on the chest will cure penumonia—at least prevent it. Skunk grease is taken internally as a cure for croup, and it will open up a stopped-up head. Onions, raw or cooked, help to break up a cold. In general "onions is healthy." Juice baked out of an onion and made into a syrup by the addition of sugar is the best cough and cold medicine for babies and young children. Steamed onions mixed with lard, preferably skunk grease, and applied warm will break up a cold in the chest and help cure pneumonia. Strong, hot ginger tea is a good cure for colds. Kerosene and sugar—a teaspoonful of sugar moistened with kerosene—will cure a cold.

One of the most common methods of administering medicine is in a tea. Teas were the chief forte of most old women. Nor were the young adverse to the use of teas. There was a general feeling that teas were harmless. They might not cure every time, but they would not do any harm. For every ill there was a tea. Pumpkin seed tea killed tapeworm. Ordinary worms in children were killed by tea made of peach pits or cedar twigs. Sage tea cured rheumatism, while wild sage tea was a cathartic. Watermelon seed tea regulated the kidneys—seemingly no matter what the trouble was. Measles broke out quickly if the patient drank hot tea made of oats. This tea would also help mumps. It might be used as an alternative

in case the patient could not go to the hog pen or if it was inconvenient to bring the hog trough to the patient. Teas of cloves, oak bark, nutmeg, flax seed, and "mule tail" weed (common fleabane) were used as cures for summer complaint in children. Oak bark tea was also used as a wash to cure galls. Walnut bark tea and tea made of "slippery" elm bark are laxative in action. Lobelia makes a tea which is an emetic "more powerful in action than a stomach pump." All of these teas are still used to some extent.

Tobacco was used extensively in folk medicine. It was good for some people. Puny children who had never had any health began to grow when they began to use tobacco. The notion was that the poison of the tobacco killed poisons existing in their systems. Those who chewed were less likely to have toothache than those who did not, and those who did not chew habitually could cure toothache by chewing tobacco. Smoking was good for very corpulent persons as it would make them "spit their fat away." Jaundice and dyspepsia are helped by chewing tobacco. Infection in wounds can be prevented by binding moist tobacco on them. Bleeding from a wound can be stopped by using tobacco on it. Tobacco smoke has many uses. It stops toothache and earache. Earache was most generally treated with tobacco smoke by applying the stem of a pipe to the affected ear and then forcing the smoke into the ear by blowing into the bowl of the pipe.

I recall vividly the first time I ever saw a baby have colic. Tobacco smoke was blown under its clothes to relieve the colic. There was a corps of willing smokers as seriously and energetically engaged as a group of physicians coöperating in an effort to save life. My childish interest was diverted from the cure and divided between the activities of a stout Dutchman with his ponderous, long-stemmed pipe and the old woman who smoked a red clay pipe with a reed stem. She had "thought of" the cure, and with her, or perhaps by her, the others had been pressed into service. Plainly she was in command. "Blow the smoke in one after the other," she said. "That's better'n tryin' to blow to wunst, and git down clost to the little feller so's the smoke won't cool off none. It ort to be hot when it goes under his dress. That's better, Callie. You've got the idee." But this fails, for pen and ink can not depict the nasal twang of the treble in which these exhortations were delivered.

One of the many delusions we had when we settled in northwestern Oklahoma was that great numbers of deadly snakes were there. People from the North and the East seemed pretty generally to have the same exaggerated notion of the danger. "Hoop" snakes, "whip" snakes, "stinging" snakes, and even "flying" snakes were described at length and in detail. Childish imagination was easily wrought upon by the yarns intended for greenhorns, but many adults were plainly concerned. A common question asked by a new arrival was, "What do you do for snakebite?" And the obliging settler would then dutifully give his entire repertoire and in turn perhaps learn a cure from his questioner. While this delusion lasted it gave a great impetus to the "talking" of cures for snakebites. To idle curiosity I owe whatever I possess of that rich harvest—a harvest that will never again ripen in such profusion.

Whiskey, used externally, but more especially internally, was the most commonly prescribed snakebite cure. Everyone knew this remedy, and even those who objected to the use of whiskey in the usual social way had generally no scruples against its use for snakebite. However, in spite of the commonness and convenience of whiskey as a cure, there were other remedies with their stout supporters who loudly claimed that they were better than whiskey—which in general was claim sufficient for any cure. The oil of a rattlesnake would *absorb* the poison and cure snakebite. The warm flesh of the freshly-killed snake that bit you would *draw out* the poison. It must be the same snake, however. Tobacco leaves moistened in vinegar and applied as a poultice *killed* the poison. A poultice of onions and kerosene would draw the poison from a snakebite. The poison would soon show as a green color in the poultice. Another antidote for snakebite was prepared by beating up the root of the vile-smelling "buffalo," or prairie, gourd and putting it into sweet milk. This was used as a drink and also as a lotion to bathe the wound. Clay and soot with sufficient vinegar to mix to the consistency of a paste would cure snakebite. A tea made of the root of *nigger head* was said to be a Cheyenne Indian cure for snakebite. This plant, which is more widely known as *purple rayed coneflower* is a member of the *Brauneria* group. However, the Indian origin may be questioned. I know of a request for some of the roots of this plant being received by the Botany Department of the Oklahoma Agri-

cultural and Mechanical College from the director of an experiment station in the Belgian Congo. He wanted to try growing the plant there with a view to testing its worth as an antidote for snakebite.

Whiskey was a rather standing remedy for a multitude of ills. It was the chief snakebite remedy. Whiskey cured colds. Hot toddies were usually taken to cure colds, but the occasional omission of sugar and water would not necessarily *weaken* the cure. Whiskey was good for a person who was "feeling bad." A swallow in the morning or at night (or both) "helped" a person. It was a good general tonic. And those whose conscience caused them to balk at Scotch or Old Crow were sometimes not averse to certain substitutions such as Hostetter's Bitters and other preparations of the kind. A man named Cunningham told me of a circumstance connected with Peruna that seriously strained a friendship. Cunningham and a fellow known as "Indigo-Red" were working on a ranch and batching together in a little shack on Beaver Creek. Everything rocked along all right for a while, but harmony did not last always. Indigo-Red was mildly addicted to Peruna; Cunningham was strongly in favor of whiskey. Indigo regularly started the day off by a generous dose of his favorite —a proceeding in which Cunningham would not join him. Once when Cunningham's supply had been exhausted, Indigo noticed that his Peruna seemed to be diminishing rather rapidly. This in itself was pardonable—even justifiable—and would never have been mentioned had Indigo not happened in unexpectedly and seen Cunningham taking a liberal dose *without first shaking the bottle!*

Folk cures are today comparatively rare. The believer in a cure hesitates to expose it to the questioning of a skeptical age. He prefers not to be laughed at. Formerly the spirit of helpfulness prompted him to tell his fellow, but today it is not so. If you would glimpse into the life of twenty-five or thirty years ago, you must first win confidence; and, unless one is naturally sympathetic he will never win that confidence. So it is that the lore of the early days is largely a closed book which loses its pages day by day as one after another of the original settlers passes on. Other sections of Oklahoma may have had—or may still possess—a greater wealth of folk lore than that of which I write. But I prefer to write of the life which I know best because I was part of it. I am not ashamed.

TALES AND SONGS OF THE TEXAS-MEXICANS

By Jovita González

In an article on "Folk-lore of the Texas-Mexican Vaquero"[1] I said something concerning the origin of border folk-lore among the peon class of *mestizos,* or half breeds, of the ranches —particularly among *vaqueros* and *pastores.*[2] In secluded communities untouched as yet by civilization, where the people still live in pastoral simplicity, folk-lore abounds. But all this is fast disappearing. The goat herds, the source of nature's lore, are almost a thing of the past, the old type of *vaquero* is fast becoming extinct, and the younger generation looks down with disdain on the old stories and traditions of its people. However there are a few out-of-the-way *rancherías* along the border where the inhabitants still cling to their old customs and retain to a great extent *el amor a la tierruca,*[3] dislike all innovations, distrust Americans and refuse to speak English. Thanks to these, a great deal of the fast-disappearing lore of the Texas-Mexican may still be gathered.

Most of the material here presented comes from three sources —the *vaqueros,* the *pastores* and an old cook.

I. Folk Tales

The stories of the *vaquero,* since he is in contact with people, are somewhat humorous, very human and often realistic. On the other hand, the *pastor,* who lived alone in the pasture cut off from all intercourse with his fellowmen, produced mystical stories of the heavens, of birds and flowers and of other forms of nature. These are stories which he in solitary nights had woven and formed in his mind.

Of all the goat herds I knew, two stand out prominently in my mind, Tío Patricio and Chón. Both came from no one knew where. Because of their child-like simplicity they were regarded with scorn by the cowboys, who considered them cowards because of their lowly position. But no cowards were

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[1] *Publications* of the Texas Folk-Lore Society, 1927.

[2] Cowboys and shepherds.

[3] Love for the soil.

these men who alone on bitter winter nights kept watch with their flocks against coyotes, panthers, and other beasts of prey.

Chón was little, black, and ugly; his wrinkled, withered face resembled a bat's, and his sharp eyes blinked with the regularity and solemnity of a toad's. He was a little heathen, a materialist who could see and understand nothing beyond his goats. On the other hand, Tío Patricio was a mystic, a visionary who saw in nature the handiwork of his Creator.

Both pastores were received with rejoicing when they made their occasional visits at the ranch; their coming meant stories from Tío Patricio and songs from Chón. The latter was a music-less bard who in a sing-song nasal tone chanted short, unintelligible ditties. In the evenings when all the ranch hands gathered under the *portal*[4] to tell yarns or to sing, Chón was always the first to be there. When asked to sing, he solemnly got up, unhooked the lantern from its hook and placed it under the table. He was so ugly, poor fellow! he did not want any one to see his facial contortions. The shortness of his musical compositions gave origin to a saying at the ranch, *"Es corta como la cancíon de Chón."* ("It is short like Chón's song.") His favorite song was *La Urraca (The Magpie)*, but why the predilection could never be imagined, for to all but himself it was a meaningless rhyme.

La Urraca	*The Magpie*
Ya la urraca se perdió pos sabe Dios donde estará anda muchacho a la plasa y hechatela por acá.	The magpie has been lost and no knows where she might be. Here, boy, run to the square and head her down this way.
Tu por aquí, y yo por allá anda Ciriaco no seás así.	You go this way, and I'll go that. Please, Ciriaco, don't be that way.

His one love song was equally short:

Jesusa me dió una rosa Isabel me dió un clavel Toma Jesusa tu rosa Yo me iré con Isabel.	Jessie gave me a rose, Isabel a carnation. Here, Jessie, take your rose, I shall go with Isabel.

[4]Arbor made with dried cornstalks.

His most ambitious song was "El Piojo y la Pulga" *(The Louse and the Flea).* The hero and heroine mentioned are to be married, but for need of a *real* to pay the priest the ceremony can not be performed. The rabbit, who is a most liberal animal, furnishes it, saying, *"Que siga la boda que yo pondré el real.*[5] The animals all give what they can and the wedding feast is held.

As to Tío Patricio, the story that follows will reveal his character better than anything that might be written about him.

Tío Patricio

Every evening at dusk Tío Patricio was announced by the bleating of his unruly flock, which arrived enveloped in a cloud of dust. He was a giant dressed in a discarded soldier's uniform; however, his shoes and hat did not match his military array, for the former were rawhide *guaraches*[6] and the latter a high, pointed, broad-brimmed Mexican felt sombrero. His black patriarchal beard contrasted with his cheeks, rosy and firm like a girl's. In fact, his complexion was the envy of all the marriageable girls of the country side. Not seldom a *señorita* braver than the rest ventured to ask, "What do you wash your face with, Tío?"

The reply was always the same, "God's water," meaning rain water. And in that semi-arid part of the country rain is rare, three or four times a year at the most.

But that is another story.

You remember there was something peculiar about Tío Patricio. He always wore a hat in summer, in winter, in fair weather and foul. Even at night he slept with it over his face so as to cover his head. He was rather sensitive about it too; no sooner would one of the ranch hands mention the word *head* or *hair* than the *pastor* silently disappeared. Of course, every one wondered at this eccentricity but no one dared ask him to explain it. The most uncouth *vaquero* knows that no gentleman ever asks another anything concerning his personal appearance.

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[5]"Let the wedding go on and we'll furnish the *real*" (12½ cents).

[6]Rawhide sandals.

Sometime in November the master was to ship cattle, and new *vaqueros* were hired to help gather them. There was one in the outfit whom no one liked; he had snake-like beady black eyes that were as sly and as crafty as a coyote's. Probably this started the men calling him "Coyote."

One evening, as customary, we were sitting around the kitchen fire telling yarns and singing. This particular night "Coyote" was telling about the ghosts that haunt El Blanco ranch. "Just about this time," he concluded in a haunting voice, "the moon shone from behind a cloud and I noticed that the ghost was as hairless as a pumpkin."

At this Tío Patricio jumped as if he had been stung by a scorpion and shot out of the kitchen with the rapidity of a hare when pursued by hounds.

"What's wrong with him?" asked Coyote. "He is a queer steer, isn't he? And, tell me, why does he always wear that steeple-like structure on his head? Do you dare me to ask him why he never takes it off? I bet my *reata* against yours I'll do it. Who'll take my bid?"

No one said a word. Pancho changed the subject, for no one would hurt Tío Patricio's feelings willingly. We heard him fixing his bed in the bunk house. A mean look came into Coyote's eyes and I knew he meant to carry out his threat at the first opportunity.

"Come, boys," I said. "It is time to sleep. We have a hard day's work before us in the pasture tomorrow."

As we entered the house I saw Tío Patricio in bed with his hat over his face. Coyote went towards him.

"Amigo, you have forgotten to take off your hat." No answer. "I say why don't you take it off, or shall I do it for you?"

He would have done it, too, had not Pancho grabbed him by the arm.

"Can't you see he is asleep," said Pancho, "and, what is more, you leave him alone. Do you hear?"

All expected trouble. Coyote measured Pancho with his eyes and, seeing the muscles of his arms and the determination on his face, skulked away.

Before daylight Tío Patricio was up and could be heard calling his dog in the corral. Not one word did any one say about last night's episode, all hoping that Coyote would forget about it.

"I tell you what we'll do," he said next morning as we were coming to the mess house for breakfast. "Suppose we recite the Rosary during the month of December; I am not much for religion but during this time I feel the need of it in my heart."

Although much surprised at the suggestion, all assented willingly, and I felt somewhat ashamed of my ill feelings towards him, and right then and there I made up my mind to like him.

Tío Patricio was not there during the services and all were surprised. He was not an overzealous religious man but we all knew his love and devotion for the Virgin.

Two weeks before Christmas Coyote suggested we have *Las Posadas*. As every one knows, these are the most solemn and beautiful services of the Christmas season. It is a service which we who are still Christians and speak God's own language hold every year in honor of the birth of the Christ Child.

"Since there is no church and no regular choir," continued Coyote, "I am going to ask the master to lend us a statue of the Virgin and we can have the services outside. You men will be arranged in groups so you can sing better; another group representing Joseph and Mary go about asking for shelter and are refused everywhere. The person or group nearest the Virgin will take them in and with that the celebration will close."

"Can any one as repulsive looking as this man be capable of such beautiful ideas?" thought I. We were so busy rehearsing our hymns that we forgot all about Tío Patricio. All this time he had kept away from us and I noticed he looked worried. Probably, it was suggested, the goats were not doing so well this winter or he had lost some kids.

Christmas Eve finally came. About eight we went to the *portal*, the place of the celebration. Every man conscious of his new shirt and rather sensitive about it, took his appointed seat. At a signal the first group arose, went to the improvised altar, and sang the introduction:

Esta noche caballeros	This night, gentlemen,
Es Noche de Navidad	Is Christmas Eve.
Parió la Virgen María	The Virgin Mary gave birth
Parió en humilde portál.	Under an humble roof.

The first group representing the holy Pilgrims started their pilgrimage:

Es José y María	This is Joseph and Mary,
Su esposa amada	His beloved wife;
Es José y María pidiendo posada.	This is Joseph and Mary
	Asking for shelter.

To which the addressed replied:

Mi casa es pequeña	My house is very small,
No caben en ella.	There is no room for all.

And thus we went the rounds of all the groups. All this time I had been wondering who was to give lodging to the Pilgrims. Then my eyes fell on Tío Patricio. The man sat rigid, pale as the moon outside. On his face was the look of a hunted beast. And then it all dawned on me. He was to sing the verse of acceptance. And he had to kneel bareheaded before the Virgin's altar. I knew Coyote was a despicable skunk, but I had not dreamed he would dare do a thing like this.

By this time all eyes were fixed on Tío Patricio. May I die before I again see any one looking so abject and terrified. Have you ever seen a rabbit which, charmed by a snake, knows that soon it is to be devoured? That is the way Tío Patricio looked. I glanced towards Coyote; the grin of triumph on his ugly face made his namesake look handsome.

The time came for Tío Patricio to sing. He got up and, walking with the steps of a somnambulist, approached the altar.

He knelt and took off his hat.

He was bald.

A dry hoarse sob shook his mighty frame.

We left him there with his humiliation alone with the mother of God.

Tío Patricio's interpretation of the stars was accepted by the whole countryside. Thus the Milky Way is the path of the saints; in June it is the trail through which St. John ascended to heaven; in July it is the path of the apostles Peter and Paul, while in August it is St. James who traverses the heavens on his white steed. Castor and Pollux are the eyes of Lucy, the little Roman maid who preferred blindness to man's love. The eyes which she lost in her struggle for chastity are up there in

the southern sky to serve as a warning to frivolous maidens. Farther down the heavens are the three bright stars, Orion, or the three Marys—Mary the mother, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the sister of Martha—who keep watch over Lucy's eyes. Venus, the morning star, is the Virgin who wakes the shepherds at dawn.

More vivid in detail and coloring are Tío Patricio's stories of birds. Every one in Texas is familiar with the road-runner, the Nemesis of rattlesnakes. This bird is commonly known as the *paisano.* The term is wrongly applied, for in its literal sense it means *countryman,* and is a corruption of the word *faisán,* pheasant, to which family the road-runner is wrongly supposed to belong. It really belongs to the cuckoo family. Whether *paisano, faisán* or road-runner, the legend connected with it is the same.

The Paisano

Every one knows that when the world was young all the creatures of nature spoke a common language and understood each other. Social classes and distinctions also prevailed among them. The eagle was the proud king of the air and all flying things, and the mocking bird had the vain glory of being the lord of the singers. In this manner all the different families with a king at their head formed a world of their own; and quarrels, jealousies and disputes were never lacking among the feathered people.

There was a bird, who, although of plebeian origin, was a distant relation of the pheasants. This made him vain, arrogant, and haughty. Every evening he went walking, his crest waving in the air and his tail switching from left to right with the pride of the peacock. He did not deign to speak to the humble sparrows and the modest dove who always mourned her misfortunes. But he was only too glad to greet the nobles and the lords of high position whenever the occasion presented itself. Forgetting his humble birth, he addressed them as cousins and *paisanos.*

"Good morning, *Paisano* Zenzontle,[7] how is your Lordship?" Or "how are you, *Paisano?*" addressing the noble Sir Cardinal.

[7]Mocking bird.

His lack of common sense and his excessive vanity blinded him in such a way that he never did notice the disdain and coldness with which he was tolerated. One day while the eagle was discussing important matters of state with the nobles of the kingdom—the cardinals, the scissortails and the hawks—the foolish cousin of the pheasant family came into the chamber without announcing himself. He did not see the consternation on the face of the nobles, who were shocked at his daring, but, bowing and smiling, said to the monarch:

"How fares your Majesty and my *paisanos*, the nobles here assembled?"

The eagle, furious at seeing the familiarity with which a plebeian treated him, cried out in a voice like the tempest of a July night:

"Out of my presence, creature of low birth! I banish you forever from my kingdom. From now on you forfeit the noble name of *Faisán*. You will forget to fly and will feed on the most unclean things of the earth, snakes, tarantulas and poisonous insects."

The poor bird, blinded with shame and mortification, tried to fly from the court room but could not; his wings had lost their strength. To his greater dishonor, he was forced to run out of the room like a common beast. Since that time he has been the outcast—a pariah—of the birds. He runs here and there among the chaparral and cactus in his endeavor to hide his shame and disgrace. When the heat of the desert plains is unbearable, something like a sob is heard. It is his voice harsh and melancholy mourning the loss of his caste.

Not only the birds mock him, but man, to remind him of his pride and vanity , calls him *paisano*.

The Woodpecker

Pájaro, pájaro carpintero,[8]	Woodpecker, woodpecker,
Pájaro trabajador	You hard working bird,
Yo no te pido dinero	I am not asking for money;
Sólo te pido perdón.	I merely beg your forgiveness.

Such is the rhyme which all Mexican ranch children repeat whenever they see a woodpecker. And if you ask them the meaning of it, this is the story you will hear.

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[8]Literally, carpenter bird.

In a very poor house, so poor that it had no roof, lived a man named Juan with his family. He earned his living making wooden spoons out of the slender Texas ebony tree. But as he did not like to work and as the process of making spoons was long and tedious, his children often went hungry. One day when his wife had scolded more than usual he took his ax with a moan and a groan and went to the nearby *potrero* (pasture). Very soon he came across what he had been looking for, a straight smooth ebony. Cursing the fate that had not been content with making him a poor man but had made him lazy also, he swung his ax and began to cut. A woodpecker came out of his hole and what was Juan's surprise when the bird spoke:

"Dear friend, do not cut down my house. My little ones can not fly yet."

"I am sorry, Carpintero, but mine are starving and unless I make spoons out of this very tree they will die from hunger."

"Please, sir, if you leave my home you will never have to work again."

At this Juan's face brightened like the April sun after a shower.

"Really, Carpintero?"

"Really, my friend." And going into his hole, Señor Carpintero came back holding a little purse in his beak.

"Here," the bird said, "this is a magic purse, and if you ever need money hold it in your hand and say: 'Do your duty, little purse.' "

Juan was very doubtful as to the merit of the woodpecker's gift; so on his way home, just to make sure, he took it out and said the magic words. Immediately it filled with gold coins. He sang and danced with joy. Never in his life, not even in the days of his courtship, had he moved with such quickness.

That same day he went to the city. Fearing to lose his magic purse, he gave it to the landlady at an inn to keep for him.

"My dear lady, be very careful with it. You see how dirty it looks, don't you? Don't be deceived by looks, Señora. It is the most wonderful purse you ever saw. I leave it in your care, but whatever you do, you must not say to it: 'Do your duty, little purse.' "

It is needless to say that as soon as he was gone the woman did what she was told not to do.

Naturally, when Juan came back both the woman and the purse were gone.

So to Juan's misfortune he had to take his ax the next day and go to the pasture in search of an ebony tree. Hoping that his friend the woodpecker would come out, he started cutting on the tree.

"What?" said the woodpecker. "You here again? What did you do with the purse I gave you?"

And Juan had to tell his story. When he had finished, the woodpecker said:

"Your head is as hard as the bark of the ebony tree you are cutting. No one but you would have done that. I shall teach you a lesson that you will never forget. Here, take this whip and when you get home say, 'Whip do your duty.' "

Of course, Juan expected something wonderful, but when he uttered the words his gift was transformed into an *alicantre* (whip snake) and oh, how well it did its duty. It beat Juan out of the house, then into the house, and out again, and the faster he ran the faster the snake whipped. He climbed a mesquite tree and the snake followed.

"Only when you ask the woodpecker's pardon will I cease to whip you," said the snake.

And down to the pasture ran the poor man, the snake close at his heels. Finally they came to the ebony tree, where, falling on his knees, Juan gasped the words:

Pájaro, pájaro carpintero	Woodpecker, woodpecker,
Pájaro trabajador	You hard working bird,
Yo no te pido dinero	I do not ask you for money.
Lo que te pido es perdón.	I merely ask your forgiveness.

"Very well," said the woodpecker, who had come to see what the excitement was all about. "But I am not satisfied with that. You and your children's children must ask pardon of my descendants for the trouble you have caused us."

So to this day Juan's descendants have always repeated the rhyme whenever they see a woodpecker.

The Cicada

La Cigarra[9] was a gay person, in fact too gay to suit his wife. In spring when the huisache was in bloom he became

[9]The locust, or cicada.

intoxicated with the balmy perfumed air and the joy of living. It was then that, forgetting his duties of a faithful husband, he made love to the butterflies, which, like flying flowers, tempted him with their beauty, and to the hummingbirds, the tenors of the fields.

His wife was jealous and when her erring husband returned home in the evening, satisfied with himself and life, you should have heard her garrulous voice rise above the stillness of night. But he said nothing and merely sat heavy eyed with love and too happy to hear. As summer came on and the July heat made his life unbearable, his romantic adventurous habits were transformed into a langorous lassitude. Perched on the bark of a mesquite, he complained in his shrill voice of the cruelty of the sun. It was then that his wife, forgiving his past offenses, bathed his feverish forehead with the morning dew. The butterflies seeing him so domesticated flew to more venturesome lovers and the hummingbirds forgot him in disgust.

All was peaceful again until spring, when passions were stirred in his heart, and his roving disposition returned. At last his wife went to the eagle, the monarch of all flying beings, and presented her plea. After due deliberation the king replied:

"Only one thing can check his roaming ways and that is to make him ugly in the sight of the ladies. From now on his eyes will be popped and round, and his colored wings an ashy gray. If this does not stop him nothing else will."

And it did, for the butterflies laughed at his owl-like eyes and colorless wings. Chagrined and morose, he came home and for months refused to speak. His wife's wishes had gone beyond her expectations; she wanted him at home, it is true, but expected him to keep her company as in the days of their courtship. Realizing that she could never be happy with this ugly creature who did nothing but complain, she went to the king again and this time asked him to make her like her husband. And with her change she became fretful like him. So to this day the shrill voices of the cicadas are heard in the heat of summer, the male complaining and shrill, the female shrill but contented.

The Cardinal

Every one regards the cardinal for the brilliancy of his feathers and the sweetness of his voice. But once he was an

insignificant, ashy gray, little person noticed by none until he met and spoke with the spirit of the plains. And this is the the story, a Texas tale—one of those fantastic creations of the fertile *mestizo* mind.

The singing birds were to have a concert in celebration of the arrival of spring. The mocking birds, the thrushes, the doves, and even the magpies filled the air with their songs. With the blooming of the trees and flowers and the arrival of the butterflies, enthusiasm ran riot among the feathered creatures. Crazed with joy, they sang unceasingly. All were joyous except a little gray bird who, too sensitive at his inability to sing, stayed at home. He tried to sing but just a gruff, hoarse sound came from his throat. He tried again and again but with no success. And if birds can weep, he wept in despair.

"If I could sing just for once," said the little bird, "how happy I could be."

"Why do you want to sing?" asked a voice.

"Why? Why? So I can sing a love song to my mate like all other birds do, and praise the beauty of the world."

"A wonderful thought indeed! I might help you, little bird, if I could but see your mate."

So the lady bird came.

"You are not very pretty, my dear," said the voice. "And you can not sing either?"

The little lady shook her head sorrowfully.

"Would you really want your husband to sing?"

"Oh, yes, yes," said the little gray wife, clasping her little claws pathetically. "We could be so happy."

"I can give beauty and voice to only one of you. Which shall it be, you or your husband?"

"My husband, if you please," said the little lady.

"Are you sure you will not regret it?" continued the voice.

"Yes, yes. You see he has to go out into the world, while I stay at home and care for my babies."

"And you," said the voice, speaking to the male, "accept the sacrifice of your wife?"

"She has chosen well," replied he in a pompous voice.

"Very well, tomorrow at dawn things will be as you wish."

And when the sun tinted the horizon with red both birds

jumped from their bed in the tree top. The male was a brilliant red. They looked at each other, the female with a smile admiring the glory of her mate, the male with a frown noticing for the first time the ugliness of his wife. Then, raising his crested head, he sang. The voice was clear and triumphant, an epic in song. He soon forgot his wife's sacrifice, grew overbearing and cruel, and scolded and pecked her because of her ugliness.

But the spirit of the Plains saw all and grew sorry for the little lady bird. He could not take away the gift he had so freely given to the male, and since he could give her just one gift he made her a wonderful singer. Whereas her husband's song was one of tirumph, hers became one of love and gratitude. Probably because of her unselfishness, the grayness of her dress has changed to a rosy tint. So now, whenever the male begins to fuss and scold, she, knowing the vanity of his sex, tosses her little head and flies off laughing at the stupidity of husbands, who, like hers, are all woman made and yet are proud of what they think is their own achievement.

The Dove

Do you know why the dove ever mourns? This is the story so common among Mexican people.

All nature, the stars of the heavens, the beasts of the forest, and the birds of the air had been told that the Messiah was to be born. And when the Angel announced the birth of the Savior, all the creatures of the earth came to worship Him, all but one—the dove. She was so humble and unassuming that no one thought of telling her the wonderful news. Yet the sign that brought the birds and beasts to the manger itself was the form of a fluttering dove—assumed by the Holy Spirit.

But the dove herself never saw the Christ Child, and that is why her song is a sob. In the mellow warm mornings of spring, or when the evening star makes her appearance in the twilight, a soft, mournful cry is heard in the *cañada*. It is the dove.

Ambrosio the Indian

If Chón was a heathen, Ambrosio, the Indian cook, was a pagan who never spoke to any one. And we as children loved

to watch him cook and suck the raw marrow from the bones. He was the barometer of the ranch, for when Ambrosio sang his Indian songs it was a sign of rain. Then the housewives brought in their washing and the children were called indoors, even though not a cloud was in sight.

When he was in a good humor, he was an Aztec; when angry, he claimed to be a wild Apache and then he yelled and whooped in a way that delighted us. But in the spring when the cactus bloomed and the air was fragrant with the prairie flowers, he hummed tunes delightfully soft. It was then that we gathered around him and begged for a story.

And this is one of them, a myth of remote times when the Indians were lords of the land and the gods walked freely among them. It was told only when the glory of the cactus in bloom brought to the Indian's mind reminiscenses of a proud past.

The First Cactus Blossom

For some unknown crime that had been committed a thing of evil had been sent to punish the Indians. It was a black shapeless beast that walked over the land, flew through the air, burning with his breath all vegetation and living things and blasting all hopes. Sometimes in the shape of an Indian warrior, gloomy and forbidding, he was the forerunner of wars, pestilence, and famine. He spoke to no one and no one dared to address him as he passed through the villages, leaving panic behind him. Like all evil things, he was most unhappy and he longed for the companionship of man, for the touch of a little child and for the smile of a maiden.

Tired of his solitary life, he went to the medicine men. The solution to his problem was difficult indeed. He would cease to be evil and become a mortal being when a maiden with hair like the rays of the sun, eyes like the royal emerald, and face like a magnolia blossom would allow him to kiss her. And because of this dim hope he grew more restless, tramped over the earth, and brought more death and destruction upon the people.

Now on the hill beyond was the city of the chief who was mighty and brave like the mountain lion. But a strange thing happened in the household of the king. A child was born to

him, not bronzed like all people, but fair, with hair like the Sun god's and eyes like the emerald. All the soothsayers and witches were called to a council to interpret the meaning of it all.

"Oh, king," said the oldest of all, "a great joy and sorrow awaits thee. This child will bring happiness to your people but only through her death."

Then the king commanded the building of a big house in the heart of a deserted island. A thick cactus wall was built all around it and a double one of maguey. In this island the child and the wisest witch that could be found were placed. In time the cactus grew so tall that the leaves reached the sky and the thorns were so sharp and pointed that not even a bird could fly through the fence.

And the king, seeing that his child was free from harm, was happy.

In the meantime the baby had grown into a lovely maiden. She sang all day and no lover robbed her of her dreams of peace. One night the old witch was awakened by the princess's screams. In her dreams she had been pursued by a black something with huge bat-like wings that filled her with terror. The witch knew that the time appointed by the prophesy was come and she began to study the means of saving her charge. Every night the princess had the same dream and each time the monster came nearer and nearer and scorched her with his fiery breath.

One evening, as the princess was walking by the wall, she was attracted by a waving plume black as night. It reminded her of the dreams she had had, but the voice that called her was sweet like the playing of a reed flute. She approached him and there heard the most wonderful things of the outside world and the people who lived beyond the cactus fence. That night she had the most dreadful dream of all, for the black monster took her in his arms and flew away to unknown regions. The old witch knew then that nothing could now save the princess. She told her good-bye and gave her a cactus thorn, with this admonition, "When in trouble, prick your hand with the thorn and you will be safe."

Next morning the princess heard the song of the unknown warrior and she came out to meet him. Forgetting himself, forgetting to be gentle, he pressed her to his breast. With a

cry of fear, she broke loose, for his touch burned like the touch of the black beast of her dreams. She, remembering the cactus thorn, pricked her hand with it as the witch had advised her. To the warrior's astonishment, the princess at once flew into space, getting smaller and smaller, and finally settled on a cactus leaf. But even then she was beautiful, golden and pale. The cactus blossoms have been so ever since.

And then he wept, and, kneeling, kissed the little flower that he had loved so well. As he did so something was born within him—a good heart.

The Gift of the Pitahaya

Woman has brought unhappiness to all people, but to the Texas Indians she proved a blessing, for through her the *pitahaya,* a most refreshing fruit, was brought to them.

In east Texas lived a maiden quick as the squirrel, quarrelsome as the magpie, and graceful as a gazelle. As may be imagined, she had more love affairs than a honey comb has honey. She favored all with her smile but accepted no one. But her father, disgusted with the state of affairs and the great number of warriors who wasted their time courting his daughter, wished to put an end to this shameful situation so little flattering to a chieftain. Calling the maiden to his presence, he commanded her to chose a husband from among the braves gathered there.

"I shall marry only when I please," said the girl haughtily, "but from among them I shall select the warrior who brings me the gift that resembles me most."

The chief no doubt gave a sigh of relief as he saw the suitors leaving. But, soon to the consternation of the father and the merriment of the daughter, they returned. They brought the most unheard of gifts. One who imagined her to be perfect brought a dove, another a milk white fawn. Others brought wild flowers, gay colored feathers and butterflies. And one who imagined his fate as a husband presented a wild cat.

Although the flowers and butterflies flattered her vanity, the wilful princess, who in reality did not want a husband, refused all the gifts. She would have none of these meek braves who wooed her not like warriors should. The suitors did not despair, but the old chief, who saw his tribe in turmoil, did.

The corn fields were abandoned, the chase was neglected, and the braves, instead of looking for flints to make arrow heads, scoured the country for presents.

One day heralds announced the coming of a prince from the far away land of the Aztecs. He was tall and straight and walked the village streets in pride and disdain. His look was bold and defiant like the eagle's. The feather mantle he wore rivalled in beauty the flowers of the prairie. Heavy bracelets of gold and precious stones circled his arms.

He asked permission to present his gift to the princess. As the fearless eyes of the maiden met the piercing, dominating look of the warrior, something like lightning flashed through the heavens.

With slow, determined steps he approached her, fixing on her the eyes of a charmer of snakes. He took something from under his mantle and presented it to the princess. It was a *pitahaya* cactus in bloom.

"Princess," he said, "this is symbolic of you who are fair like its flowers, but sharp and forbidding like the thorns that cover it. Under its thorns, however, hides a most delightful fruit, sweet as nectar and refreshing as dew. And you are like that. Under your rudeness and capriciousness hide sweetness and love. That I will discover as I discovered the fruit of the *pitahaya*. Come."

And with his mantle of feathers he covered the maiden, who followed him far south, where the cactus blooms and the mocking bird ever sings of love.

The Devil on the Border

Si se descuidan las jovenes bellas
El diablo verde cagará con ellas.

If the fair maidens are not careful,
The green devil will carry them away.

This is what children are told down on the border when they do not mind their elders about staying indoors during the noon day heat. The Evil One no doubt feels at home during the terrific heat of the noon day hour as he wanders among the ranches of the Rio Grande country. And it is because of this heat no doubt that Satan's visitations to the border country are not uncommon.

I have been told of three such visitations. The first one is a housewife's tale, the place, time and names of the characters being unknown. The second visitation happened recently at a cave near Devil's River in the vicinity of Del Rio and was told to me by a University of Texas student whose father witnessed the incident. The third is an old border legend, very popular because in it the Evil One gets fooled by a *vaquero.*

(1)

On an out of the way ranch lived a *vaquero,* poor in the world's goods but blessed by many children. However he did not consider the children a blessing but rather as a curse. When the last one came he was very much vexed and decided to do away with it. The idea of shedding his own baby's blood was repugnant to him. After much thinking he thought of an excellent plan. He placed the child in a box far from the house and sat there day and night to keep his wife from feeding the infant. The baby cried until it got so weak that no sound came from its mouth. All the while the mother, frantic with grief, begged her husband to save the child. But he would not yield. Then, wild in her despair, she cursed him and ended by saying, "May the Devil get you."

About midnight of that same day the whole ranch was enveloped in a terrific whirlwind, the smell of sulphur was suffocating, and a dust of ashes choked the people. Above the roaring of the wind a piercing cry of death was heard. No one dared go to the place where the man and the baby had been, for all remembered the wife's curse.

With the coming of daylight, the people's fears were dispersed and they approached the place. The baby was dead. A white dove, probably its spirit, hovered over the little corpse. As for the man, all that remained of him was a heap of greenish yellow sulphur.

(2)

Now we shall hear in the words of the University student concerning the second apparition as her father saw it.

"The story I am about to tell will not be believed by many, but it really happened down the Devil's River, where the Evil

One had been locked up in a cave. It was told to me by my father, a God-fearing, truth-loving man.

"One evening as he was sitting on the porch of our house, smoking his after-dinner cigarette, a stranger called on him. He was a handsome man who looked more like a Spaniard than a Mexican. He showed letters of introduction from friends. Being a very hospitable man, my father gave him lodging for as long as he wished to make our home his home.

"He was a cattle buyer. He said he had come to Del Rio to buy stock, and my father introduced him to the ranchmen of the vicinity. There was something strange and mysterious about him, something that made you shrink when you approached him. As long as he stayed in our home he was never known to invoke the name of God or the saints, but as a host it was not my father's duty to question him about his religious convictions.

"One morning, as usual, he rode away to the neighboring cattle ranches. At night he did not return. Two days passed and still he did not come back. Since every one knew he had several thousand pesos, his disappearance was arousing great curiosity, and since he had been our guest, my father, fearing to arouse suspicion, organized a searching party.

"As he knows every crag, thicket and cave in the Devil's River country, he led the party. So engrossed was he in his reflections that he did not realize how far ahead of the others he was. So he stopped on the bank of the river to wait. Suddenly he heard groans coming from the direction of the opposite bank. He swam across and the moans sounded much nearer. Apparently some one was in great pain, for the groans were heart-rending and chilled his blood. He walked along the bank until he came upon a cave formed by the river. The moans were right at his back, and then he realized that some one was in the cave.

"Crouching on all fours, he entered and what he saw was enough to make any stout man tremble. A man was buried up to his neck in the sand. His face was gashed and scratched horribly. One of his eyes was black and so swollen that it was closed. His hair was standing on end. His beard was clotted with blood. The raw nose bone protruded above torn skin. It was the stranger. As soon as he saw my father, he cried out in a piercing voice:

" 'Don't come near me. The devil is here. Don't you see him there at the corner of the cave?'

"My father moved nearer.

" 'Go back, I tell you. Do you want him to get you as he got me? See how he leers and jeers at me.' And, saying this, the unfortunate stranger tried to bury his head in the sand.

"My father, who had often heard of how the devil had attacked other people, was chilled with horror at what he heard. But he had a Rosary in his pocket and, taking it out, made the sign of the Cross and commanded the evil spirit to depart. He must have left, for the stranger gave a sigh of relief, saying:

" 'He has gone. Get me a drink of water.'

"My father left to get the water. When he returned, the Evil Spirit was there again, for the man was shaking and trembling like one possessed and crying out, 'He is there again. Take out your cross.'

"The sign of the cross was made and the man was again at peace.

"He was taken out of the cave and placed on the bank of the river. While my father went to fetch a burro on which to carry him home the man sat by the edge of the river holding the Rosary in his hand.

"Soon the searching party returned and as the man was lifted from the ground to the burro, the Rosary fell from his hands. Something like a whirlwind enveloped the group, and to their consternation both the burro and rider were carried up in the air. The man screamed, the burro brayed, and the people, realizing the significance of the whole thing, said a prayer. A sound like the bellow of a bull was heard up in the air and beast and man fell to the ground.

"For weeks the patient suffered. His physical injuries and the phychological effects of the devil's visitation had made a wreck of him. When he recovered, a priest was called. The priest heard his confession and gave him absolution. Then the man told my father what had happened. The morning he left home as he came near Devil's River he was taken up into the air by what he thought was a whirlwind. However he noticed he was holding on to something slippery, long, and slimy. As he looked up he saw the awful face of the devil. He tried to turn loose but the cloven hoofs of the Evil One beat him on the face and his hands were stuck to the tail. Satan

took him over the whole town of Del Rio and the cemetery and finally dropped him in the cave. The Evil One then tortured him with his presence and because of that he had buried himself in the sand.

"The stranger stayed until he regained his health and finally disappeared without explanation. Whether he went home or was carried away by the devil is a thing that has puzzled those who knew him."

(3)

It was an abnormally hot day in Hell. The big devils and the little devils were all busy feeding the fires, making final preparations to give a warm reception to a barber, a student, and a banker who had announced their arrival. A timid knock sounded on the door, and Satan, who was sitting on a throne of flames, sent one of his henchmen to see who the arrivals might be. In walked four men. One, razor in hand, gave away his profession; the second held on to a wallet like Judas Iscariot to his; the third exhibited a notebook devoid of notes. The three were abnormally terrified. The fourth did not appear a bit impressed by the fiery reception awarded them, but with the coolness and nonchalance of one accustomed to such things glanced about with a look of curiosity. He was an athletic sort of a man, wore a five gallon hat, *chivarras* and spurs, and played with a lariat he held in his hands. He seemed to be as much at home as the others were terrified. Before he was assigned any particular work, he walked to where a devil was shoveling coals, and, taking the shovel from his hands, began to work. Satan was so much impressed that he paid no attention to the others but went to where the stranger was. He did not like this man's attitude at all. He liked to watch the agony on the face of the condemned, but here was this man as cool as a September morn. He went through the flames, over the flames, into the flames and did not mind the heat at all. This was more than his Satanic Majesty could endure. Approaching the man, he commanded him to stop and listen to what he had to say. But the man would not stop and kept on working.

"O, well," said Satan, "if that's the way you feel keep it up, but I really would like to know something about you and where you come from."

"If that's the case," the stranger replied, "then I feel I must satisfy your curiosity. I am Pedro de Urdemañas by name. I have lived through the ages deceiving people, living at the expense of women who are foolish enough to fall in love with me. Now as a beggar, now as a blind man I have earned my living. As a gypsy and a horse trader in Spain, then as a soldier of fortune in the new world, I have managed to live without working. I have lived through the equatorial heat of South America, through the cold of the Andes and the desert heat of the Southwest. I am immune to the heat and the cold, and really bask in the warmth of this place."

The Devil was more impressed than ever and wanted to know more of this strange personage.

"Where was your home before you came here?" he continued.

"Oh, in the most wonderful land of all. I am sure you would love it. Have you ever been in Texas?"

The devil shook his head.

"Well, that's where I come from. It is a marvelous country."

"Indeed?" said the Evil One, "and what is it like?"

Pedro described the land in such glowing terms that the Devil was getting interested in reality. "And what's more," continued Pedro, "there is plenty of work for you down there."

At this Satan cocked his ears, for if there was one thing he liked better than anything else it was to get more workers for his shops.

"But, listen," he confided, "you say there are many cows there. Well, you see I have never seen one and would not know what to do were I to see one."

"You have nothing to fear about that. There is a marked similarity between you and a cow. Both have horns and a tail. I am sure you and the cows will become very good friends."

After this comparison, Satan was more anxious than ever to go to this strange land where cows lived.

So early the next day before the Hell fires were started, he set out earth-bound. Since his most productive work had been done in the cities and he knew nothing of ranch life, Satan left for Texas gaily appareled in the latest New York style. He knew how to dress, and as he strolled through the earth seeking for Texas, he left many broken hearts in his path.

Finally, on an August day he set foot on a little prairie surrounded by thorny brush, near the lower Rio Grande. It was a hot day indeed. The sand that flew in whirlwinds was hotter than the flames of the infernal region. It burned the Devil's face and scorched his throat. His tongue was swollen; his temples throbbed with the force of a hammer beat. As he staggered panting under the noonday heat, he saw something that gladdened his eyes. A muddy stream glided its way lazily across a sandy bed. His eyes caught sight of a small plant bearing red berries, and his heart gladdened at the sight of it. It was too good to be true. Here was what he most wished for —water and fresh berries to eat. He picked a handful of the ripest and freshest, and with the greediness of the starved put them all into his mouth. With a cry like the bellow of a bull he ducked his head in the stream. He was burning up. The fire that he was used to was nothing compared to the fire from chili peppers that now devoured him.

But he went on, more determined than ever to know all about the land that he had come to see. That afternoon he saw something that, had he not been a devil, would have reminded him of heaven. The ripest of purple figs were growing on a plant that was not a fig tree.

"Here," thought Satan, "is something I can eat without any fear. I remember seeing figs like these in the Garden of Eden." Hungrily he reached for one, but at the first bite he threw it away with a cry of pain. His mouth and tongue were full of thorns. With an oath and a groan he turned from the prickly pear and continued his journey.

Late that same day, just before sunset, he heard the barking of dogs. He continued in the direction from whence the sound came, and soon he came to a ranch house. A group of men, dressed like Pedro de Urdemañas—that new arrival in Hell who had sent him to Texas—ran here and there on horses gesticulating. The sight of them rather cheered Satan up.

And then he saw what Pedro told him he resembled—a cow. Here was a blow indeed. Could he, the king of Hell, look like one of those insipid creatures, devoid of all character and expression? Ah, he would get even with Pedro on his return and send him to the seventh hell, where the greatest sinners were and the fire burnt the hottest. His reflections were interrupted by something that filled him with wonder. One of the

mounted men threw a cow down by merely touching its tail.[10] "How marvelous!" thought Satan. "I'll learn the trick so I can have fun with the other devils when I go back home."

He approached one of the *vaqueros* and in the suavest of tones said, "My friend, will you tell me what you did to make the lady cow fall?"

The cowboy looked at the city man in surprise, and with a wink at those around him replied, "Sure, just squeeze its tail."

Satan approached the nearest cow—an old gentle milk cow—gingerly, and squeezed its tail with all his might.

Now, as all of you know, no decent cow will allow any one, even though it be the king of Devils, to take such familiarity with her. She ceased chewing her cud, and, gathering all her strength in her hind legs, shot out a kick that sent Satan whirling through the air.

Very much upset and chagrined, he got up. But what hurt more were the yells of derision that greeted him. Without even looking back, he ran hell-bound, and did not stop until he got home. The first thing he did on his arrival was to expel Pedro from the infernal region. He would have nothing to do with one who had been the cause of his humiliation. And since then Satan has never been in Texas, and Pedro de Urdemañas still wanders through the Texas ranches always in the shape of some fun-loving *vaquero*.

II. Songs

As I explained in the article, "Folk-Lore of the Texas-Mexican *Vaquero*," already alluded to, the *Texanos* have produced no vernacular music of their own excepting the *tragedia*, or *corrido*, the most rudimentary type of song. This does not necessarily mean a lack of creative power or a lack of imagination. The vast wealth of folk-loric music inherited by them from Mexico is sufficient to satisfy their cravings for music and poetry, for no other Spanish American country offers as great a variety of vernacular music as Mexico.

But since we are not discussing Mexican music, only those songs which have become Texan by adoption and which form an important part in the life of *Texanos* will be discussed.

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[10]The art of throwing a cow by tailing it used to be extensively practiced on Texas ranches. It is known as *colear*.

No one knows the time or the occasion when these songs were first introduced into Texas. The first troubadours of the Texas frontier were a motly crowd, *vaqueros,* goat herders, smugglers and not seldom bandits escaping from justice.

Remigio Treviño

Of the latter type was Remigio Treviño, a soldier stationed at Camargo, who in the early sixties made up his mind to kill and expel the few Americans living along the border. With a band of men he swept across the river when least expected, killing the settlers and burning their homes. His one boast was that altogether he had killed ten Americans. But in 1863 while making a raid on Rio Grande City he was captured and received the one punishment meted to all outlaws. He was hanged. The night before the execution he composed a ballad in which he tells his family and friends goodbye.

El año del '63
fué desgraciado pá mi
yo la carcel conocí
engrillado de los pies.
muertos me acumulan dies.
Pronto me llevan a la horca
el dinero no ha valido.
Yo, Remigio era mi nombre,
Treviño, mi apelativo.

The year '63 was an unhappy one for me;
I was sent to jail with chains on my feet.
I am accused of killing ten
and soon I'll go to the gallows,
I, whose name was Remigio and was surnamed Treviño.

A los denunciantes dan
su persona y lealtad.
Con felonía y maldad
me entregaron con desdén.
Y asi para que es el bien
al verme yo con esposas.
No han valido dolorosas
de hombres que mucho han valido
palabras que por mi rogaron.
Yo, Remigio era mi nombre,
Treviño, mi apelativo.

To the accusers were given
their freedom and their liberty.
With felony and hatred
they gave me away with disdain.
Life is worth nothing to me now
when I find myself in chains.
Supplications of great men were of no avail
for me, I whose name was Remigio and was surnamed Treviño.

Adios madre y hermanos,
adios todos mis amigos
den un doble de campanas
que de por Dios se lo pido
Pues ya me voy al olvido
me quito de padecer.
Yo, Remigio era mi nombre,
Treviño, mi apelativo.[11]

Goodbye, mother and brothers,
goodbye, all my friends;
I beg you to toll the bells
for I am going to oblivion;
my sufferings are at end,
I, whose name was Remigio
and was surnamed Treviño.

[11]Recited by an old man at Rio Grande City, August 14, 1928.

This is the earliest Mexican ballad composed on Texas soil that I have found. The turbulent period following the independence of Texas was one of resistance to the Americans who came as far south as the border. I have been told that many *tragedias* originated then, but the above is the only one that I have been able to collect.

"The Tío Pancho Malo Song"

A much later ballad was composed by an old man, Tío Pancho Malo, after he had sold his few acres of land. In it he mourns the loss of his *jacal* and his horse and the fact that he has to abandon the country where his wife was buried.

Este rancho de los Guerras
Este rancho soflamero
Que me hizo vender mi hancón
Siendo tan calavacero.

Yo no siento mis jacales
Ni tampoco mis cocinas
Lo que siento es mi caballo
Que le vendí
A Ines González.

Ay mi pobre María Rita
Que la deje sepultada
En aquella lomita
Tan triste y desolada.[12]

This ranch of Los Guerras,
this gossipy old ranch,
forced me to sell my farm
which produced so many pumpkins.

I do not regret the loss of my hut,
neither the loss of my kitchen,
but I do regret the loss of my horse
which I sold to Inez González.

Ah, my darling María Rita,
I have left her buried here
by that lonesome hillock
so dreary and desolate.

Mexican songs are either realistic and spicy or sad and melancholy. In the most popular compositions of the first class, whether of love or nature, words often have a double meaning. A song which at first reading, or hearing, appears very innocent will on second reading present a roguish, picaresque trend. But not even the most scrupulous mind can take offense at what is being said, for it is presented in a happy-go-lucky and natural manner. The raciness of this type of song however is lost upon translation.

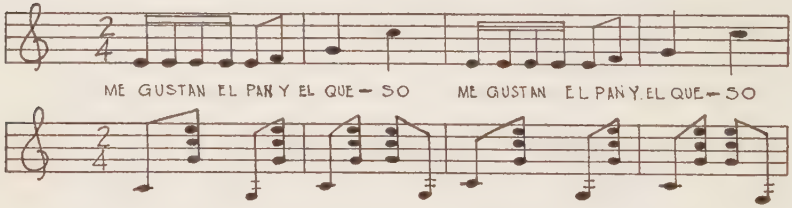
The Mexican love song is brief. "It is a moan and a sigh and it can not be otherwise than short. It is a thought expressed in a musical form that has only one burden. In musi-

[12]Sung by Tío Pancho Malo at Las Viboras ranch.

cal composition it is probably the briefest composition. It must convey what it has to say and must express in a poetic and convincing manner what a learned musician would require many measures to convey. In these songs the musician has sentimentality and that concentrated in a clear and brief form. He sees the soul of the people who do not understand any other work but that of acquiring a sweetheart and who know no other grammar than the conjugating of the verb *to love.*"[13]

El Sombrero Ancho

The songs here presented are classified as ranch and love songs. The first, *El Sombrero Ancho (The Broad-Brimmed Hat)*[14] is a Jarabe arranged by Antonio Zúñiga, a native of Silao who played it for the first time when the German musicians Herz and Coenen visited the country. They translated the song into German and made it very popular in Berlin.



Pepa no quiere coser
Ni quiere tejer en gancho
Se quiere civilizar
Con uno de sombrero ancho.

Pepa no longer wants to sew
Neither will she crochet,
But she longs for civilization
With a man wearing a broad-brimmed hat.

CHORUS:
Ay, que sonecito
Ay, que por el me muero
Ay, que me recompito
Por un sombrero ancho.

CHORUS:
Ah, what a lovely tune!
Ah, I'll surely die for it,
But I am also perishing
For a man wearing a broad-brimmed hat.

Que sabroso el pan y queso
Cuando lo venden en rancho,
Pero es mas sabroso un beso,
Debajo de un sombrero ancho.

How savory is bread and cheese
When you buy it at the ranch
But better still is a kiss
Under a broad-brimmed hat.

[13]*El Folk-Lore y la Música Mexicana*," Ruben M. Campos, p. 80.

[14]Guitar arrangement by the violinist, Alfredo M. Garza, San Antonio. The songs were sung for me by Miss Argentina Blanco, of San Antonio.

CHORUS:

Tengo yo mi galoneado
Más rico que el don Pancho
Mi Chata me lo ha adornado
Pues le gusta el sombrero ancho.

CHORUS:

Le he comprado su toquilla
Con sus amarras de plata
Cuando yo te pida un beso
No me lo niegues ingrata.

CHORUS:

CHORUS:

I have my embroidered hat
Richer than that of Don Pancho,
My Chata did the embroidery,
For she loves a broad-brimmed hat.

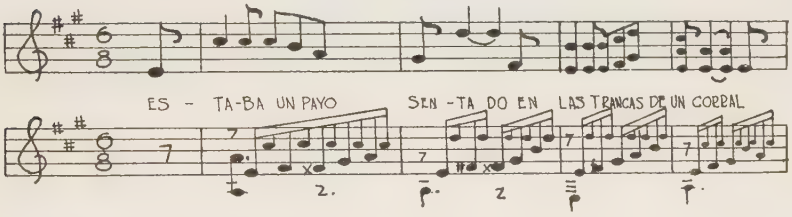
CHORUS:

I have bought a band for it
And it has a silver fastening.
When I ask you for a kiss
Do not refuse it, ungrateful.

CHORUS:

Coplas Del Payo

The next, *Coplas del Payo (The Rustic's Song)* is both a love and a ranch song and is characteristically Mexican of the peon type of the last century, when the *amo* was master of all the peon had, even his sweetheart.



Estaba un payo sentado
en las trancas de un corral
y el mayordomo le dijo:
–no estés triste Nicolás.

–Si quieres que no esté triste
lo que pida me has de dar;
y el mayordomo le dijo:
–ve pidiendo Nicolás.

–Necesito treinta duros
porque me quiero casar
y el mayordomo le dijo:
–Ni un real tengo Nicolás.

A rustic was seated
on the rail fence of a corral
and the overseer said,
"Why so gloomy, Nicolas?"

"If you object to my sadness
you must give me what I ask."
And the overseer said,
"Begin asking, Nicolas."

"I need thirty dollars
because I want to get married."
And the overseer answered,
"Not one penny, Nicolas."

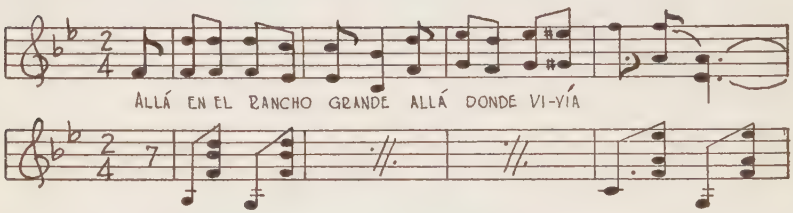
–Necesito de mi Chata
porque me quiero casar
y el mayordomo le dijo:
–Tiene dueño Nicolás.

El payo desesperado
al barranco se iba a echar,
y el mayordomo le dijo:
–De cabeza Nicolás.

"I need the love of my Chata
because I want to get married."
And the overseer said,
"She belongs to another, Nicolas."

The rustic in a desperate mood
was about to jump down a cliff.
And the overseer said,
"Please go headlong, Nicolas."

El Rancho Grande

El Rancho Grande (The Big Ranch), a typical ranch song of modern times, was composed in Mexico about 1925 and immediately became part of the repoirtoire of the Texas ranches. In it the *vaquero* speaks of his sweetheart, the pleasures of ranch life, and of what to the *vaquero* is heaven on earth—a good horse.

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Allá en el rancho grande,
allá donde vivía
había una rancherita
que alegre me decía
que alegre me decía,

1

Down there at the big ranch,
down there where I lived,
there was a little ranch maid
who gaily said to me:

2

–Te voy a hacer tus calzones
como los que usa el ranchero
te los comienzo de lana
y los acabo de cuero.

2

"I am going to make you some trousers
like those worn by the ranchmen.
I shall begin them with wool
but will finish them in leather."

3

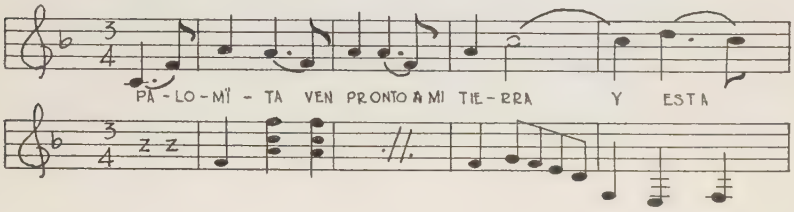
El gusto de los rancheros
es tener su buen caballo
ensillarlo por la tarde
y darle vuelta al potrero.

3

The greatest joy of the ranchmen
is to have a good horse,
to saddle him in the afternoon
and go out to see the stock.

La Polomita

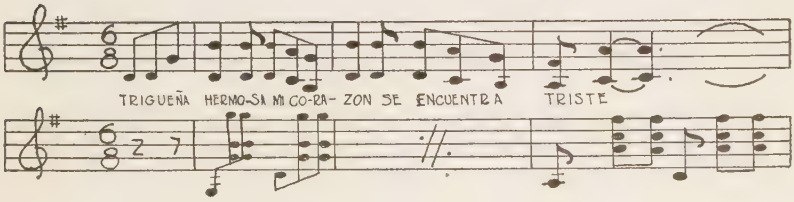
The next two love songs are, like others of the kind, brief and have only one theme: telling the loved one of the hopes and aspirations for a future happiness. The first one, *La Palomita,* is a delicate composition of subtle sentiment and almost classical in its perfection.



Palomita ven pronto a mi tierra
y estaremos en gracia de Dios
subiremos del monte a la sierra
y estaremos felices los dos.
Por que quiero yo nunca dejarte
rendido adorarte
si te amo yo a ti.
Palomita ven pronto a mi tierra
y estaremos en gracia de Dios.

My little dove, come to my hearth
and we shall be in grace with God.
We shall go from the hill to the valley
and happily we shall live.
I want never to leave thee,
but always adore thee, my
little dove.

La Trigueña

La Trigueña Hermosa (The Pretty Brunette) is no doubt one of the most popular of popular folk songs. It formed part of the vernacular music of the country long before its music was written by the composer Ponce.

Trigueña hermosa, mi corazon se encuentra triste
porque no sabe si en algun tiempo le correspondes
yo te aseguro que en esta vida no hallas otro hombre
que te quiera trigueñita, como yo.

Con la esperanza trigueña hermosa yo te he querido
Con la esperanza trigueña hermosa yo te he adorado
y estos trabajos que entre los dos hemos pasado
con la esperanza de que Dios nos premiará.

My beautiful brown maid, my heart is sad,
because it can not tell whether its love will be returned.
I assure that you'll never find a man
who will love you as I do.

I have loved you hopingly, beautiful, brown maid,
and I have loved you adoringly,
trusting that God in his goodness
will reward our many woes.

LEGENDS OF WICHITA COUNTY

By Betty Smedley

It was a man's country! There is little doubt of that when we read what J. W. Steele had to say about it in 1901: "The old times are passing away. The thirty thousand nomads who now inhabit the Panhandle must succumb to a new power that does not enforce its edicts by writs and in courts,—the power of immigration, the forerunner of which is the locomotive. The iron pioneer has shrieked the death knell of lawlessness wherever it has so far gone. The 'Farewell festive cuss' of the western newspapers must soon be said to all the cowboys. Women will come. That is the sign of doom. American women go to church. Preachers will come. Children will be there, the heralds of the little white houses that will shine on the hill, as they do in Kansas. The process will be short, the time brief. It will not be ten or twenty years, but four or five. Those who have not seen the wonderful process, have no idea of the astontonishing rapidity with which the wilderness may be transformed." The prophesy was fulfilled.

Strictly speaking, Wichita County is not in the Panhandle proper. Until somewhere between the years 1850 and 1855 it, as well as other counties west of the present Cooke County to the boundary of Childress County, were in what was known as the Cooke Land District. In collecting the legends of this county, I find its history and folk-lore so interwoven with that of other counties that it is well nigh impossible to say this or that belongs to Wichita County. However, legends and folk-lore of this section trace their origin to three principal sources, which represent distinct stages in the development of the country.

First are the stories of buried treasure—legends which are typical of other sections, as well as of Wichita County, although in our county the only buried treasure ever known to have been recovered was found with cable tools and rotary rigs and not with pick and shovel.

Second come the stories of the cow camp—fables of a strange day and strange time, originated in the era when all of Northwest Texas was one great cattle country.

Last are the stories of oil development, and if it may seem strange to you that anything so recent as events of 1910 may become legendary, I have only to say that the true story of the early exploration of this country for petroleum has become so confused in transmission that today it would probably be less difficult to find the buried treasure of Belas Carter than two men who will agree on how, when, and where the first oil well in Wichita County was completed. The true story of the oil development could undoubtedly be unravelled from fiction, but the divergence of opinion relating to it which has already arisen presents an excellent example of how legends are given life. Two decades hence, it seems reasonably certain, the early oil development of Wichita County will have a glamour and a romance which will approach that now held by the two-gun cowboy and the dance hall of '49.

For one of the most interesting treasure stories of this Wichita country. I am indebted to Belas Carter: seven times up the "Old Trail" behind a herd of steers, a veteran of the famous XIT Ranch, a man still proud that his position was "left hind swing" in the XIT outfit. So far as I can reproduce his language, I'll let Carter tell his story of the treasure at old Fort Belknap, which has evaded him through a lifetime:

"One day a feller named Jackson and I were sent over to the L. F. D. range. When we got in sight of the Pecos, about twenty miles above Roswell, we saw a group of horsemen down by the river. We could see them for a long piece. Directly we saw two horses running like they wus in a race, then we saw horses and riders go back to where the outfit wus. Next came a shot, one of the riders fell, and the rest of the outfit climbed the hurrikin decks of their ponies and took out.

"When Jackson and I got to the place, there laid a man shot through the neck, and bleeding something turrible. Jackson lit out for Roswell for a doctor, and I got down over the man and clamped my thumb and finger on the artery where the blood was flowing; the man coughed and jerked the artery loose and the blood spurted so bad I thought he'd die the next minute. He thought so too, and began to talk to me about himself; said as how he'd been a pretty bad man, that the jig was now up, and he wanted me to have his horses and guns and what money he had because I'd helped him.

"Then he told me that he and four other men had robbed the bank at Monterrey in Mexico. Before they could get across the Rio Grande two of them were shot by officers, and after they crossed over, officers got two more of them; so he'd thought it over and decided to go to Montana with a pack horse on which he carried eighteen thousand dollars loot from the Monterrey bank. The money was in gold doubloons worth about $20 apiece.

"After several days of hard riding, he decided to get rid of the money, he said, so in the night he goes to a ranch house and stole the bean-pot and wagon rod from the chuck wagon. He told me over and over again that he buried the money, and that if I would cut open the right handle of his war bag I'd find a written description of where the money was buried. He got weaker and weaker. All the time I was a-holding his neck trying to stop the blood. He pulled me down and whispered, 'The money is sure there and it's yours.' Then he died.

"Instead of the doctor coming, the sheriff, Pat Garrett, came. When Jackson got to Roswell and told that a man was shot, Pat Garrett didn't wait to get a doctor. In those days when a man was shot, he didn't need a doctor; he needed an undertaker. It was about dark, so I pulled the saddles off the horses and turned them loose to graze, hobbled. I laid the saddle beside the door of an old empty 'dobe house. I told Pat the man had given his things to me, but Pat said, 'No, you have no witnesses to that fact and the law will have to take charge of the dead man's property.' I was determined to have the description of the treasure out of the war bag, and finally I got away from Pat and slit the handle of the bag, ran my fingers up in the handle and pulled out a piece of paper that was rolled up tight. I jus' stuck this little roll down in my breeches pocket till morning; didn't have a light, nor a chance to read it, if I had of had a light. When I did read it I found this description:

" 'Buried one mile of Fort Belknap; 256 steps north of a little creek; 48 steps east of a cottonwood tree; and 86 steps west of a cactus marked swallow fork, $18,000 is in a bean pot, the depth of the wagon rod with half the ring sticking out; three small rocks against the ring.'

"A wagon rod, ma'am, is forty-two inches long, so that money was buried pretty deep. Then there was another description:

" 'Two and one-half miles up that branch on the west bank under a large mesquite tree with a limb projecting west, buried two and one-half feet deep in the crevice of a rock, wrapped in a Navajo blanket is a Winchester, six-shooter, and two hundred and fifty dollars in Mexican gold doubloons and a ten dollar gold piece. The crevice is covered with loose gravel thrown in.'

"This last I found, also the spot where the other was buried, but before I could do any digging a man who claimed he owned the land came along and stopped me. I tried many times since to find the place, but have never been able to do so. This was thirty-five years ago. During that time I found out the Monterrey bank really had a robbery and learned the dead bandit told the truth. So they's eighteen thousand dollars in gold doubloons buried out there in what is now Young County someers."

Another interesting, if somewhat doubtful, story of early treasure is told in Wichita County of M. Gilbert, the first settler in this part of the Red River country. Mr. Gilbert's name was Mable, doubtless a thing of no little vexation to him at the time; the old County records which I examined list this first settler as "M. Gilbert." An old survey shows his farm in the southeast corner of the John Deck and W. N. Anderson Survey, fronting on Red River where Gilbert Creek empties into the river. This is about ten miles from the city of Wichita Falls.

Old-timers recall seeing the deep ditch which Gilbert dug all the way around his farm to keep buffalo from eating his crops. These same old-timers say that Mr. Gilbert was "a sort of mineralogist," and prospected for gold and copper up and down the Red River as far as the mouth of the Pease. One story goes that while digging a storm cellar, he unearthed a solid slab of pure copper, a foot long and an inch thick. The other story has to do with his fabulous find of gold.

A mile west of the Gilbert farm there is a little knoll, and old-timers say that Gilbert worked a whole summer at that knoll recovering a wagon load of gold nuggets. The scene of the discovery is supposed to have been just east of where the town of Byers now stands. It is also reported that Mr. Gilbert recovered some pieces of timber about four feet long and two or three inches thick. This timber was of cedar, roughly hewn, and since there is no cedar in all the Wichita country, it is commonly accepted that Mr. Gilbert discovered the hiding place of

the loot of some of the many bandit gangs that infested the northwest Texas and southern Oklahoma territories during that time.

Stories of the Wichita cattle country are almost as numerous as mesquite trees, and might well occupy a good-sized volume devoted to the imaginings of these early-day folk, many of whom still live to recount as fact incidents so strange as to appear fictitious. They relate chiefly to the men, the cattle, and the weather, the three principal topics of conversation of that day and time. Of these I shall give only four as being somewhat typical of the variety of yarns that you will hear at any gathering of old-time residents anywhere in the Wichita area.

For the first of these, I am indebted to Mr. Frank Kell, of Wichita Falls. When Mr. Kell and his associates bought the right-of-way for the Northwestern Railroad, now a part of the mighty Missouri-Kansas-Texas system, there was a stipulation that the proposed town be named for the owner, Burke Burnett. Application was made in due order to the Postmaster General and was refused because the name was too long. A friend of Mr. Burnett's, one Clabe Merchant, had business in Washington. Before Mr. Merchant left town, Mr. Burnett remarked, "Clabe, go around and see Ted and tell him I said get in behind that Postmaster General and get this town named for me." Subsequently, Mr. Merchant delivered the message to President Roosevelt, and Burkburnett in Wichita County became the scene of one of the most colorful and romantic epochs in the history of the Southwest.

Another tale relates how Archer City secured its first church, about the time when Wichita and Archer counties were one. As the story goes, six of the progressive citizens of the town went on a fishing trip on Onion Creek. The day seemed ideal but before the anglers had hardly wet their lines, a terrific storm rolled over the country. A blinding bolt of lightning shattered a boulder weighing many tons and another flash splintered a tree from top to bottom hardly fifty paces from the party. One of the fishermen was heard above the storm: "Well, boys, if I get out of this alive I'm going to start a subscription for the building of a church of God in Archer City."

The other members were agreeable, the storm being such as it was, and it was decided that for every donation of $25 there

should be one vote and that the majority of votes should determine the denomination in charge of the church. The man making the proposition was a Baptist and two others admitted the same persuasion; two were Methodists but the Baptists persuaded them to vote with them. Five votes were cast for the erection of a Baptist church, when the sixth man said:

"Confound it, boys, she's goin' Campbellite. I am voting six votes to your five." With the two hundred and seventy-five dollars thus subscribed they organized and selected directors as soon as they returned to town. The deed to the lot where the Christian Church of Archer City now stands was executed to the following men as trustees: J. W. Scott, R. P. Whitten, and John Baxter.

One old-timer in Wichita County recently told the story in a local newspaper of the great blizzard back in the eighties, when, he said, cattle by the thousands were frozen so that cowboys following the drift fences could step from one carcass to another for miles without putting foot to the ground.

A friend of mine relates as truth the story of a Wichita County wind that blew his Stetson hat in a southeasterly direction five miles across a pasture and into his neighbor's woodpile. Five days later the wind shifted and blew the hat back into his own yard.

I am also indebted to Belas Carter for the last story of the cow country. According to Mr. Carter, a herd had been started north. Reaching Doan's store, the trail men found Red River too high to cross and a high wind developed into "damn near a hurrikin." The cattle drifted until at night they were bedded down near the mouth of Pease River. Next morning all efforts of the cowboys to get the cattle up met with failure. Investigation showed that the ground was covered with thousands of flat rocks which were found to be warm, and the cattle refused to leave their beds, "sticking to the ground like sick kittens to hot bricks." For three days the cowboys battled in vain to get the cattle on their feet; then a new storm came up.

Now, "the skies got as black as ink and lightning played all in and 'round that herd. Flashes would connect up from one set of horns to another. It was a sight on earth. It wasn't long 'til we had the durndest stompede I ever did see. We run 'em together and except for a few that was crippled, and losing thirty-five head, we crossed the river and went on into Kansas."

Mr. Carter said that later "an old cowman told me that a Choctow Indian told *him* that the Comanches burned to death, right there where those rocks were, a young girl, after scalping and killing her mother and father." On the very ground where the weary cows refused to leave the warm rocks are the monuments erected by a progressive oil company commemorating the fantastical picture conjured in the imaginative mind of old Belas Carter.

JOINTSNAKE AND HOOP SNAKE

By Gibbons Poteet

I

Is it or is it not? Some say 'tis and some say 'tisn't. I had always thought it a myth and in a letter printed in the Dallas *News* so expressed myself. But right there I struck a snag.

First I had a letter from a lawyer at Waxahachie who asserts that he would never have believed that a jointsnake after having been broken into several pieces, if left for a spell, would reassemble its parts and that the snake, become whole again, would wiggle gaily off to a snake dance—that he never would have believed this if he had not seen it himself. Here is his language: "One day I was walking on the Katy track from Foreston, going in a northerly direction, on my way home. About a mile north of Foreston I saw a snake on the railroad dump. I was then a boy of 12 or 15 years old. Seeing nothing but a fence post to kill the snake with, I picked up the fence post and dropped in on the snake. To my amazement the snake broke into several pieces and the pieces took out one after the other, each piece following right along after the other. After they had run this way for four or five feet they joined back together and the snake became the same old snake and ran off. The pieces traveled slowly and it took maybe more than a minute for them to rearticulate. There is such a thing as a *jointsnake,* and works on natural history have the jointsnake specifically listed among the things that are."

Well, that settles it. If one cannot believe a lawyer, whom may one believe? Then I began to inquire around Roxton and found something like a dozen good lawabiding and intelligent citizens who assert that they have seen snakes unjoint and then join again. One octogenarian raised in Colorado and Arizona says, "Yes, they'll do that. That's one of the ways of nature." One of our café keepers—a good man who makes good coffee—says, "Oh, yes, I have seen them do it." One of our good pioneer farmers, a man who dug his farm out of a "hogwaller thicket," a man not given to romancing—not even a yarn teller—says, "Yes, they will do it. When I was a boy in Missouri I broke one in two with a little hazel stick. I can see

the stick and the snake now. And I stood and watched the parts reunite. As well as I can remember, the head part just backed up and hitched onto the various sections like a switch engine picking up cars."

Next I tackled a redheaded farmer from Delta County—a good man who pays his debts and will fight a circle saw. "Did you ever see a jointsnake go back together?" "Yes, sir. I have broken them up several times and seen them reunite. They will certainly do it." I did not dispute his word.

Then in came one of our local doctors—a man who is a graduate of the Louisville Medical School and a man who reads and observes and is somewhat erudite in matters in general. The doctor said, "Yes, I have broken them up when I was a boy and have seen them reunite." "Well, doctor, how do you account for it?" "Well, I don't know, unless there is some electric or galvanic power resident in the snake's head by which it is able to draw the parts unto itself again. It has been noted that if you 'kill' the head the parts never rearticulate." The witnesses all agree that if you "kill the head" the jig is up so far as the snake is concerned.

In discussing the matter on the streets of Paris (Texas) I ran into a successful farmer about sixty years old who has actually made his farm by farming and is even now performing the miracle of "making a living" farming. He said, "Yes, Gibbons, they will do it. I have seen them do it many a time." This is an honest man who pays his debts. If one may not believe a man who, since the coming of the cars, still pays his other debts, whom, for goodness' sake, may one believe?

Then one day, while riding with our undertaker on the way to a funeral, I asked him, "Say, did you ever see a jointsnake go back together?" "Oh yes," says he, "when I was a boy, I and two other boys were out in the thicket killing snakes and we killed a jointsnake. They break up easily, you know, when you hit them with a stick. We had heard about their going back together and decided to try it out. We broke the snake into several pieces and I stole one of the pieces and put it in my pocket and we went off a little way and waited about an hour. When we went back we saw the snake whole again, crawling off—it had hooked up all right and left my section out. I suppose they have their parts standardized so that the various sections will fit anywhere you put them. We caught up with

the snake and broke him up again and I threw down among the fragments the section I had been toting. We stood there and watched the snake reassemble and rearticulate and go crawling off. We did not disturb him any more for we felt that any snake who was so good a mechanic deserved to be spared."

A little later the boys were discussing the jointsnake down at Pap Dugan's store and the old railroad man walked in. After having listened to the various recitals, he said, "Yes, they will do that very thing. I remember one time the boys found one in the railroad yard down by a swampy place. They broke the snake into about seven sections and then we stood and watched one of the prettiest pieces of switch engine work you ever saw. The head part backed up and hooked onto the various sections one by one with the tail part standing up back there wagging the signals, and when all was ready, it hooked on as caboose and off the snake went down into the jungle. Yes, sir, they'll do it."

Now, notwithstanding all this abundant, abounding, and astounding evidence, here is what Mr. Raymond L. Ditmars, Curator of the New York Zoological Society, says, after I had written him for the facts on the jointsnake:

> DEAR MR. POTEET:
>
> The "glass snake" is actually a legless lizard *(Ophisaurus ventralis)*, and though this species has the ability to voluntarily snap off a portion of, or its entire tail, the separated units cannot grow together again. However, the lizard sometimes does grow a new, though abbreviated, caudal appendage.

So there we are just where we started. We asked Mr. Ditmars about the "jointsnake" and he talks about a "glass snake."

II

The usual crowd of farmers had gathered down at Pap Dugan's store Saturday night to talk crops and tell yarns while their wives "went to the picture show."

Spring having got round again with rising sap and rising hopes, and corn planting being over, the boys were feeling pretty good. Charley Smart was telling "as how" in blowing stumps with dynamite in some Johnson grass he had busted

into a whole den of snakes and the blast had scattered them all over the pasture and, as there are no buzzards now to carry off the carcasses, he guessed he had fertilized about an acre till he wouldn't need any commercial at all. This naturally started the boys on snake yarns, than which there is no more fascinating subject. Each had a snake tale to tell and finally Shorty Stubbs came to the front with his famous hoop snake experience.

According to Shorty, the hoop snake is the worst viper of all on account of the speed with which he attacks his victim. "A rattlesnake now," said Shorty, "is plum harmless almost on account of his always first rattling before he strikes. He is the fairest snake there is—always puts you on your guard, same as saying, 'Look out now, I'm here. If you don't want to get hurt, don't crowd me.' And the copperhead and moccasin, they are so slow that a baby could get out of their way. But a hoop snake, now, he comes like the wind—and makes no more racket than a rubber-tired bicycle."

"What do they look like, Shorty, and how do they perform?" asked Slim Shanklin.

"Well," says Shorty, "a full grown one is about eight to nine feet long and has a slim keen body jist right for running fast. And it isn't his head that a hoop snake hurts you with—it is his tail, for on the end of his tail he has a horn or spike sorter like a rooster's spur about four or five inches long and sharp as a needle. About a half inch from the sharp end is a little valve-like opening through which he shoots his pison—and his juice is some pison, now. The scientists have never found any anecdote for that pison."

"You mean antidote instead of anecdote, don't you, Shorty?" asks Pap Dugan.

"Yes, maybe that is it," says Shorty. "I don't know much about words but I know about pison and hoop snakes. Now, when a hoop snake takes a notion to tackle you, he don't lose time crawling round on his belly like a common snake. No, sir. As soon as he decides what animal he is going to tackle he curls himself into a regular hoop—that's how he got his name—and takes his tail in his mouth and rises up jist like an old-fashioned bicycle casing and here he comes like hell a-beating tan bark."

"Did you ever see one, Shorty?" asks Charley Smart.

"See one, I guess I have, lots of them back in Tennessee. One nearly got me once. It was summer time and I was out in the woods squirrel hunting and had stopped under a big wild plum tree. I happened to be looking down the path thinking maybe I might sight a squirrel when I see that hoop snake coming burning the wind. I knew it was no time to hesitate and when I make up my mind to do a thing I do it now. I jumped up and grabbed a limb of the plum tree and was eight feet up before you could say scat. And I wasn't any too quick, for jist as I had got out of reach that hoop snake struck the plum tree—stuck his spike into the body of the tree at least an inch. You see, when the hoop snake is within about fifteen feet of his victim he straightens himself with that sharp tail foremost and drives his spike with a powerful penetrating force. He jist strikes once and that is usually enough. This one jerked his spike loose and lit out. Well, boys, I knew he had poisoned that tree, for before I could get to the ground I see the leaves wilting and curling up, and the plums begin to shrivel up and fall off right now. I took my gun and went home, for I couldn't have hit a squirrel then if I had found one big as an elephant."

Some of the boys laughed a little as if they didn't believe Shorty's tale, but old Luke Larkin spoke up and said, "Boys, I am prepared to believe Shorty, for I, too, have had some hoop snake trouble. Mine happened back in old Alabama in '87. I was out in the field hoeing one day and I see a hoop snake coming for me right down a cotton row. Well, sir, I was so scared I jist dodged and hid behind my hoe handle. That snake socked his horn into that seasoned ash handle and, believe me or not—it was an eye hoe—the old kind—that hoe handle swelled up and bust out of the hoe before I could get to the house. Yes, sir, lost a plum good hoe handle."

STRAP BUCKNER OF THE TEXAS FRONTIER

By Florence Elberta Barns

Among the frontier heroes of history and legend, none is more truly a folk-creation than Strap Buckner of the Austin Colony in Texas. It is the purpose of this study to recount evidence to show that Strap Buckner as a legendary hero derives, as he should according to good folk-lore principles, from an actual historical character, Captain Aylett C. Buckner, a lively and tempestuous member of the Austin Colony.

In the first place, I shall review the life history of Captain Buckner; in the second place, I shall summarize the legends about Strap Buckner; and, in the third instance, I shall offer in the two sets of data a comparison that eventuates in my conclusion.

I. Captain Aylett C. Buckner, Texas Pioneer

The earliest recorded dates of the activities of Captain Buckner are in a letter written by him from the Colorado River on April 20, 1825, to Stephen F. Austin.[1] The letter in part reads:

> Now Sir in 1812 and 1813 I fought for that independence under which we now live Commanded by Guterrez and advanced property for the good of the Expedition; after which I was conserned with Genl Menes [Mina]: after which with Genl Truspilassos and Long and lost considerable property taken by Enatio Paris all of which I believe I can make manifest to the world. . . .

The so-called Magee-Gutierrez Expedition, as everyone knows, was a daring attempt in 1812 and 1813 against Spanish authority in Texas. It was this expedition which Buckner was a member of, and to which he gave some kind of material aid. The spirit of revolution, however, did not die with the unhappy outcome of the Magee-Gutierrez Expedition. The fiery daring of Magee and Kempner inspired another man lately resigned from the American army, James Long. According to the letter just quoted, Captain Buckner was a member of the latter half

[1] *Austin Papers*, edited by Barker, Vol. I, Pt. II, pp. 1076–1077.

of the Long Expedition, the enterprise undertaken in August, 1821, when Long joined plans in New Orleans with Trespalacios. That he was with Long and not Trespalacios seems to be manifest from the fact that he suffered heavy losses from the attack of Perez.

From the historical facts and dates of these two expeditions and from Buckner's letter, it is possible to construct a chronology—with gaps—for Buckner from July, 1812, to October, 1821. (1) He was a daring adventurer, a soldier of fortune, who was in Texas probably by July, 1812. (2) He was with Magee from July or August, 1812, to some date in 1813. To this expedition he gave some kind of material as well as military aid. He may have fled to one of the border towns, such as Natchez. (3) He was with the Long party of the Long-Trespalacios Expedition, undertaken in August, 1821, and suffered loss from the attack of Perez. Whether he was with Long in the first half of the expedition, from June 17, 1819, to August, 1821, is not clear. (4) He was free from any ties of allegiance at the end of the Long-Trespalacios Expedition in October, 1821.

From other direct evidence we know that Captain Aylett C. Buckner was one of the earliest of Austin's three hundred colonists, settling on a tributary of the Colorado late in 1821 or early in 1822.[2]

Back of all this direct evidence of dates and events is a line of teasing circumstantial evidence contained in an account of early experiences written by William S. Lewis in 1873.[3]

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[2]According to Captain John Ingram, a close friend of Buckner's and a responsible member of the Austin Colony, Buckner came from Virginia to the Colony in 1821. (J. H. Kuykendall, "Reminiscences of Early Texans," in *Quarterly, Texas State Historical Association,* Vol. VI, pp. 236–253; the above note on p. 252, n. 1.) According to another authority, the first white settlers in Fayette County were members of the Austin Colony: Buckner, Powell, and Jesse Burnam, all of whom settled in the wilderness along the banks of the Colorado River in 1822. (F. Lotto, *Fayette County,* pp. 86–95.) Buckner himself said that he was one of the first men who built a cabin on the Colorado and tilled the soil. *(Austin Papers,* Vol. I, Pt. II, letter from Buckner to Stephen F. Austin, April 20, 1825, p. 1076.) A letter from James E. Brown Austin to Stephen F. Austin on January 29, 1822, was written from "Buckner's on the Colorado." *(Austin Papers,* Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 471.)

[3]"Adventures of the 'Lively' Immigrants," in *Quarterly, Texas State Historical Association,* Vol. III, July, 1899, pp. 1–32.

He began with the statement: "Sometime early in 1821 I became clerk of the new steamer *Natchez,* Captain Buckner, single engine, as all boats were then built. We were lying in the wharf at Natchez, and had just finished discharging her freight." Lewis continued to relate his experiences, including the following references and incidents that may be relevant to our present purpose of assembling the life story of Captain Aylett C. Buckner. (1) Captain Buckner, on one of the trips, had not got on well with his mate and in New Orleans had discharged him for intoxication. (2) On a certain day late in September or early in October, 1821, while Lewis was unpacking a trunk and box, three men came on board the boat and inquired for the captain. Captain Buckner had spent the night in town and had not yet returned to the boat. The gentlemen then said they wished to go to New Orleans; they signed the register and went ashore until time for the boat to leave. The men were Colonel Stephen F. Austin, William Little, and a Mr. Hawkins. (3) Shortly afterwards, Captain Buckner and three or four "young bloods" returned to the boat and made ready to play a game of cards. When the Captain saw the signatures on the register, he "bawled out at the top of his voice, 'Whoop, hurra! hello there, come here boys, come quick! . . . . Look, we have as passenger to the city the Emperor of Texas.' " (4) Austin was on his way to New Orleans to seek colonists and to fit out a boat for their accommodation. (The boat selected was the *Lively.)* (5) Buckner gave Lewis eighteen or twenty dollars to help the latter get his outfit to join the Austin Colony.

But not once did Lewis mention Captain Buckner's Christian name or even his initials! And we are left to a comparison that may lead us to a discovery or to an ironic jest of dates and incidents. But at least, certain interesting speculations arise from a comparison between an established chronology of Captain Aylett C. Buckner up to 1822 and the affairs of Captain Buckner of the *Natchez.*

Aylett C. Buckner fled to Texas at the collapse of the Magee-Gutierrez Expedition, and it is not too improbable that he was one of those who took refuge in Natchez. There he would have heard of Long's undertaking in 1819. To make a living or to satisfy some of his desire for excitement, he may have been a captain on river boats, including the *Natchez* in 1821, plying

between Natchez and New Orleans. If he was captain of the *Natchez* early in 1821, it is evident that he did not join Long's first expedition in 1819; but while his boat was tied up in New Orleans on a trip in August or September, 1821, he may easily have met Long, who was in that city recruiting men and vessels and joining forces with Trespalacios. He may even have left his boat for a time to accompany Long, returning to it in October after the failure of Long's project. According to history, Austin was in Natchitoches as late as October 16 and was in New Orleans by November 10. Before the end of 1821, probably, Captain A. C. Buckner had made affiliation with the Austin Colony; Captain Bucker of the *Natchez* could have made the same affiliation.

From 1821 it is possible to piece together a fairly complete record of the activities and character of Aylett C. Buckner. In a letter in which he told of his adventures with Magee, Gutierrez, and Trespalacios, he gave further information about his activities:

> . . . I was one of the first men who built a Cabbin on this River [the Colorado], the first man who had a plough stuck in the field I have kept a house ever since I have been settled in your Colony I have never asked the first Cent for a man eating under my Roof and have fed as many and I believe more people than any man in this Colony Yourself not excepted and have not recd the first cent.[4]

From another source it is known that he had brought into the Colony a quantity of gunpowder, which he sold to the settlers at six dollars a pound.[5] This supply of ammunition was perhaps the initial stock for the trading-post which he and Powell seem to have established. As evidence of this partnership there exists an itemized bill issued by Buckner and Powell to Josiah H. Bell.[6] In various other places Powell is referred to as Buckner's partner.

A number of the original three hundred settlers who settled on tributaries of the Colorado gave their names to these streams. For example, James Cummins established the first saw and grist mill on Cummins Creek; William Rabb built another mill on Rabb's Creek; J. Duty gave his name to Duty

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[4] *Austin Papers*, Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 1076.
[5] J. H. Kuykendall, *loc. cit.*, p. 252, n. 1.
[6] *Austin Papers*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 858–859.

Creek; and A. C. Buckner's name was given to a stream that has appeared as Buckner's Creek on Texas maps from Austin's sketch in 1829[7] to the latest Rand McNally wall map. After flowing through a country that in 1822 was rugged and wild, offering a challenge to the settlers, this creek meets the Colorado River at the present town of Lagrange.

The challenge of the country included Indians; and Buckner early became an Indian fighter. Noah Smithwick tells of a trick played by Buckner on the Tonkawas and Karankawas. These two tribes of Indians, who were incessantly at petty warfare with each other, agreed to meet at a certain time and place to fight it out. To Buckner, as a trader, each tribe came secretly for arms and ammunition. Buckner supplied the needs of both tribes in the hope that they would completely exterminate each other. On the day of the battle, Buckner with field-glasses in hand, took his stand at a safe post of observation. The two hostile tribes rushed at each other across a prairie, opened fire before they were within shooting distance, and wasted all their precious ammunition without injuring either a "Cronk" or a "Tonk." Each tribe, however, claimed the victory.[8]

Although Buckner's trick failed, his intentions were not daunted. On March 21, 1823, a Frenchman from the United States, who called himself Bt. Rashall, passed through the Colorado neighborhood with a man whom he called an Indian. With them the two had a small *caballada* of sixteen horses and mules, marked with different brands. From Buckner and Parker they stole thirteen head of horses, and from Martin Varner four head. A party from the Colony overtook them near the Trinity River, recovered the horses, and brought back the two men with their assistants for trial and punishment.[9]

Later, in August of the same year, while Austin was at Castleman's on the Colorado River, the Tonkawa Indians stole Castleman's *caballada* and several horses belonging to Austin and Bastrop. Austin with thirty men went in pursuit of the stolen animals and recovered them. He ordered the chief to whip the

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[7]Original map in the *Austin Papers;* tracing by W. L. Darnell in Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin,* following p. 284.

[8]*Evolution of a State,* p. 21.

[9]Letter from J. H. Bell to Trespalacios, May 4, 1823, in *Austin Papers,* Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 636–637.

Indians who had committed the theft, and he threatened to shoot future thieves. For a little time, at least, there was no more horse-thieving in that community.[10] Evidently, Buckner was one of the thirty men in Austin's pursuing party; evidently, also, he was especially efficient, for of all the party Austin mentioned by name only him and Morrison.[11]

During the first six months of 1824 Buckner seems to have been very much occupied with Indian troubles. In March the prowlings of the Waco Indians caused no end of anxiety along the Colorado, although they insisted that they were looking for the Tonkawas and had no evil intention against the white settlers. Furthermore, they backed up their amicable attitude with a request for a treaty with the colonists. Accordingly, Austin, in June or July, sent a commission to their camp to carry from him his speech desiring peaceful relations with them. This commission seems to have been headed by Captain Aylett C. Buckner, and included, among others, Thomas M. Duke, William Selkirk, James Baird, Thomas H. Borden, a Jones, and a McCrosky. With them they carried goods and trinkets to trade for horses and peace. They found the Waco Indians in their camp near the present site of Waco and the Tawacanies a short distance away. The Austin commission smoked the peace pipe with both tribes, shared their hospitality for two or three weeks, and returned home.[12]

Judge Thomas M. Duke, who knew Buckner intimately, related some anecdotes of this trip that reveal the character of Buckner. Judge Duke said that he was a man of fair education and intelligence, of undoubted courage, but of excessive irascibility. In Duke's own words two anecdotes follow:

> As we were returning home from our visit to the Waco village we traveled nearly all one day without any thing. I was very hungry and after we camped in the evening and before our supper was done cooking, I took a bit of meat out of the pot to appease a little the cravings of hunger. Buckner eyed me sternly, and said testily "Duke, I wouldn't be a d——d dog." I made some reply which transported him with anger. He challenged me to fight him on the

[10]Eugene C. Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, p. 103.

[11]Letter from Stephen F. Austin to Garcia, in *Austin Papers*, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 685.

[12]Barker, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–107; and J. H. Kuykendall, *loc. cit.*, pp. 248–249.

ground and on the instant—proposing rifles as the arms and ten paces as the distance. I kept my temper and alternately laughed at him and reasoned with him. His choler soon subsided, and by next morning he was as agreeable as usual. He and Joshua Parker were once bringing home a *cavallada* from the Rio Grande. At their camp one night, Buckner from some trifling cause, became greatly enraged at Parker and challenged him to fight instanter with rifles. Parker, who knew his man, at once agreed to fight him, but as it was quite dark, proposed to postpone the duel until next morning at daylight. Buckner reluctantly assented to the proposal and passed a sleepless night. At the dawn of next morning he rose to prepare for the combat, but found Parker still asleep. Daylight came and Parker still snored on. Buckner became impatient, and touching Parker, awoke him. "Come Parker," said he, "we are to fight this morning." Parker, after stretching his limbs and yawning, said, "Buckner, I have been thinking upon this matter and have come to the conclusion that we had better not fight, for if we should both fall, what in the h—ll would become of the *cavallada?*" This stroke of humor had the desired effect. Buckner quickly pacified, and the partners resumed their journey perfectly reconciled.

Buckner, like Herbert's Scandinavian "champion," seems to have been—

"mild and kind—
Save when the fury vex'd his mind."[13]

The statement issued to Josiah H. Bell by Buckner and Powell on July 25, 1824, already mentioned in another connection, indicates that Buckner was a scrupulous and orderly business man.[14] Here, too, his frank confidence in the word of another man is well illustrated.

N. B. If you made use of the horse which you recd at twenty dollars in any way that might have caused his death I shall expect you to pay me that amt but if you merely wrode him home to your house and did not use him afterwards I am willing to sustain the loss though I am in no ways bound to do so neither am I under any obligations to sustain the loss. AYLETT C. BUCKNER.[15]

In the summer of 1824 Buckner, together with about two hundred and seventy others of the original three hundred settlers, received titles to land. His record reads:

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[13]J. H. Kuykendall, *loc. cit.*, pp. 251–252.

[14]See further, note attached to the statement, *Austin Papers*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 858–859.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 859.

	Sitios	Labors	Location (pres. county)	Date of title
Buckner, Aylett C.	1		Matagorda	July 24, 1824
" "		2	"	August 24, 1824[16]

The year 1825 was a stormy period in Captain Buckner's life. The turbulence of his nature asserted itself in extravagant disregard for the rights and feelings of others in the Austin Colony. On January 16 of that year, Seth Ingram in a letter protested to Colonel Austin that Buckner had been to town to make application for the league of land "taking in the forks of Hunney and Caney creeks," a location already chosen by Ingram more than a month earlier. Ingram justified his claims on the basis that he had not had any land on tide water; and he manifested extreme annoyance at what he considered Buckner's failure to consider his rights. He agreed, however, to leave the decision to Austin's judgment.[17]

Apparently, Colonel Austin was satisfied with Ingram's prior claim and revoked his promise to Buckner, who in a long letter of April 20, 1825,[18] expressed himself to "the Father of Texas" thus:

> I consider Myself as Much entitled to be satisfyed as other men ought to be and My impressions were that you would not take away my land even if you did not think proper to give Me what you said you would; but that I might apply to Government for the lands which I located and if I cannot obtain satisfaction from you I shall most certainly loose No time in having recourse to our Government stating all the rights and reasons of my demands—
>
> Now Sir I will appeal to your-self or any candid man whither other men ought to have more land or has a better right to request more than Myself or Not I know no other reasons of their getting better treated except that they have more Money—I have viewed everything in as fair a light as I could; from report I know that sum men get half a league and dont pay a cent because the other half is transferred to You or Your Brother I know that lands are unequilly divided I do not considder Myself a perfect simpleton neither am I blind My Eyes are open and I look and watch with vigilence: My demands are small compared to what the demands of others are and in as Much as My sufferings have been great and in the hight of friendship I hope you will grant them which are My two locations I

[16]Lester G. Bugbee, "The Old Three Hundred," in *Quarterly, Texas State Historical Association,* Vol. I, p. 111.

[17]*Austin Papers,* Vol. I, Pt. II, pp. 1019–1020.

[18]*Ibid.,* pp. 1076–1077.

have previously Made if You refuse granting that which I think the Government will generously bestow on me I shall apply to that authority which governs us both for so much as I think in justice I am lacking—

As I shall have Company in a short time to go with and the means of going I wish you to give me a positive and speedy answer so that I May know what to do.

That Buckner's dissatisfaction increased until Austin considered it a matter for discipline is made evident by a series of documents, the first of which, dated June 7, 1825, and addressed by Austin to Saucedo, named Buckner and Alexander Jackson as "perversos y centenciosos" and mentioned their arrest.[19] On the same day Austin issued a lengthy appeal to the colonists for loyalty to the Government in face of the "acts of these contentious men," of which Buckner was one. That Buckner had sent out notices of a meeting is mentioned by Austin:

An invitation for a Meeting has been made and secretly circulated by an individual whose turbulent and refractory disposition has long disturbed the peace and public order, purporting to have for its object an investigation of my authority, and with a view "to shake off the Yoke and disperse that dark cloud that has so long kept the settlers in darkness."

As regards this Meeting, I will merely observe that, it has been proposed in open violation of the laws of the land, and particularly that of the tenth of January, 1824, for those laws require an application to the constituted authorities; and no such application has been made. This invitation proposes "*to shake off the yoke.*" What yoke? the words have but one meaning—they are plain, and the inference direct, which is the Yoke of the Government.[20]

That Austin considered Buckner's rebellion of serious possibilities is clear from his extended explanations and his inclusion of various official documents relating to the government of the Colony and to the methods of acquiring land therein, these two matters being the sources of Buckner's displeasure.[21]

But Austin's business for June 7, 1825, was not yet done. As Judge of the Colony, he notified the sheriff of the Austin Colony "to summon William Rabb, Andrew Rabb, Thomas Rabb, Joseph Newman, Robert Keykendall, William Kincheloe,

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[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 1123–1124.
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 1124–1125.
[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 1124–1131.

Alexander Jackson, John Clark, and Eli Hunter, to appear before me at my office in this place on Saturday the eleventh day of this month between the hours of Ten O Clock of the forenoon and two o'clock of the afternoon then and there to give evidence as to any thing they may know relative to the disorderly and Seditious Conduct of A. C. Buckner, against the Authorities of the Government or the public peace of this Colony."[22]

As Lieutenant-Colonel of the Militia, Austin ordered Captain Horace Chrisman "to raise a body of Twenty Men from your Community and hold them Subject to my orders at this place on Saturday next the Eleventh day of this month," the cause stated as "the Public peace being endangered by the refractory and seditious practices of Aylett C. Buckner and others Connected with him. . ." And finally, again as Judge, Austin gave the sheriff an order for the arrest of A. C. Buckner "to answer charges of disorderly and seditious conduct against the authorities of the Govt and against the peace and tranquility of this Colony."[23]

Buckner did not receive information of all these proceedings unmoved. On June 10, 1825, he addressed himself as follows to the head of the Colony:

> Sir I [sic] appears that I am called here for undertaking one of the most just causes in my opinion imaginable that which is not only admitted of under free Governments but even under the most despotic Governments. Now sir as it respects myself I disregard rigid measures but sir you probably are not apprised of the bad effects it may have I do assure you sir it will enrage the people beyond all calculation and it will be the downfall of yourself and I believe the Colony—These are the reasons why I make the following proposition which is this—
>
> That the whole colony shall be called together and if there is a majority in favor of the petition it shall go on if not it shall fall The people in every direction have herd of your irons for my imprisonment, as it respects myself I disregard all you can do I ask no favors, but for the prosperity of the Colony is the reason why I make the above proposition. It is a proposition that every man in the colony will approve of with few exceptions.[24]

On June 10, also, William and Andrew Rabb notified Austin that they had posted his address and had read his documents to

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 1131.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 1131-1132.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 1132.

the people of their community.[25] And then, on June 11, Andrew Rabb wrote Austin from Big Bernard that illness would prevent his proceeding further in obedience to the subpoena, and that he knew about the case only what everyone else knew, with the possible addition, as follows: "A few days ago, when in company with Mr. Buckner, he observed, that If You prosecuted Jackson, it would only be thro' malice, and that he (Buckner) would fight for Jackson 'as long as he had a drop of blood in his veins.' "[26]

Finally, on June 13, Austin wrote the following letter to James Cummins:

> The matter has been investigated which induced the summons of A. C. Buckner before me, and the result of such investigation has satisfied me that the acts of said Buckner which were deemed exceptionable proceeded from misconception, and the said Buckner having manifested a submission to the Laws and authorities of the Government—Therefore in order that the public may be satisfied as to the result of this matter it is directed that the whole affair be dismissed, under the belief that his deportment will be such as to merit the approbation of the authorities of the Government and the more effectually to avoid any excitement which a reference to the subject in private conversation might create it is recommended that it be totally forgotten and consigned to oblivion.[27]

The reason for the abrupt termination of the prosecution of Buckner is no where made clear; and the part Buckner's own letter of August 10 may have had in the matter is open to conjecture. As Alcalde of the District of the Colorado, James Cummins was the logical person to receive such information from Austin; but Buckner's letter to Austin, dated August 10, 1825, suggests that Cummins had in some way offended Buckner after the case had been dismissed. In spite of Buckner's spelling of the name, it is more likely that he was referring to James Cummins in his own home district than to John or James Cummings in Brazoria. The letter reveals the fiery emotions of the pioneer Buckner:

Colorado 10th August 1825

Colo Austin

O my friend if the espression may be applyed; There is an affair existing between J. Cummings and myself: which I wish and must

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 1133.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 1133.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 1133–1134.

have settled, My hart Cannot sustain the burthen which it now has to support: As I told you a few days ago never can I brook to impositions from any man much less from a man of Cumming's standing; Never the less I will condescend to meet him at any hour on or before the setting of the present sun that my hart may bleed out its vengeance and be releaved of that torment with which I am so deeply oppressed—

I would have suggested the affair yesterday but I was not disposed to bring about any confusion while you were executing the functions of your office.

Whenever I leave this world I wish to be buryed under my own soil I therefore wish to purchase or make arrangements for one thousand acres of Land.

Yours with the highest Esteem and respect

AYLETT C. BUCKNER.[28]

This letter also shows Buckner's desire for domain. Of any duel between him and Cummins there seems to be no extant record. By September 7, 1825, Buckner was sufficiently recovered from his excitement of the summer to give his attention once more to the acquisition of property. In a letter to Austin of this date he inquired about military claims based on his earlier adventures and about certain leagues of land in the Austin Colony. In a postscript he asked about Powell's chances of getting land.[29] Both Buckner and Powell were bachelors and were therefore subject to certain land rules applying to unmarried men.

Another letter from Buckner to Austin, dated November 2, 1825, from the Lower Settlement Brazos, went further into Powell's affairs. In connection with Powell's problem, Buckner gave expression to a bit of philosophy: "I do not consider it a fair request and my advice to him would be not to recall anything he has written or said unless he has written or said that which he ought not to have done for it (is) too tough for a man to do that which does not accord with his conscience."[30]

The last record of Buckner in the year 1825 appears in the Census Report of December 31, for the District of Colorado during 1825. From this census we learn that Aylett C. Buckner was designated as the head of a family (although he never

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 1162.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 1193.
[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 1230–1231.

married), and that his occupation was farming and stock-raising. Other columns on the census sheet were headed "Male children," "Female children," "Hirelings," and "Servants." Buckner had no data for these columns, but he most certainly had an opinion to offer; and he scrawled it across the space reserved for these four columns: "but despise the form of this paper because it is calculated to convey rong impressions for hirelands [sic] and Negros ought not to be in the same column."[31]

Buckner's serious quarrel with Austin in 1825 seems not to have weighed against him in his future relations to the Colony.[32] In a document of January 4, 1826, Austin appointed Moses Morrison, William Kincheloe, and Ay C. Buckner "judges of the election for Alcalde for the district of Mina to be held . . . the 14th instant . . ." About May 1, 1826, Austin authorized Captain Buckner to command an expedition of militia against the Wacos and Tahwacanies. Austin's Militia Report, dated June 14, 1826, named Aylet C. Buckner as one of the commanders with a total company of 109. According to one authority, in the winter of the same year, Captain Buckner with his company pursued and defeated a band of Carancawas who had murdered two families near Elliott's Crossing. Thirty Indians were killed, "the greatest loss these Indians ever sustained in any one fight with the Colonists."

The vigor and activity of Buckner attracted the attention of B. W. Edwards, who, in December, 1826, sent fervent letters to the colonist, urging him to join the Fredonian Movement.[33] Buckner made clear his position in the matter by signing his name to a set of resolutions drawn up by residents of Bay Prairie declaring their loyalty and offering their services in suppressing the movement.[34]

From 1828 to 1832 Buckner served with several other prominent men of the Colony on the Board of Health for Bay Prairie and the lower part of the Colorado. Their particular duty was to take precautions against smallpox and other contagious diseases.[35]

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[31] *Ibid.*, p. 1244.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 1245, 1318, 1357; Kuykendall, *loc. cit.*, p. 250.

[33] *Austin Papers*, Pt. II, pp. 1546–1547.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 1569.

[35] "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin," 1828–1832, in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXIII, p. 302.

In 1829 Buckner took a friendly interest in Austin's affairs and sent him a letter of advice.[36] In December, 1829, Buckner received sixty-five votes for the office of regidor, a position comparable to that held by a present-day alderman.[37] In 1830 the office of first regidor actually became Buckner's temporarily, through the arrest of H. H. Teague, incumbent of the office.[38]

In June, 1832 Buckner yielded to the solicitation of certain patriots, in spite of the protests of Captain Ingram and, having settled his affairs and made his will, he marched off to Velasco with the Mexican youth he had partially raised. In the battle of June 26, he and the Mexican boy were killed.[39] His passing took away one of the most picturesque characters of the earliest days in the Austin Colony.

II. Strap Buckner, Texas Folk-Lore Hero

The folk-hero, Strap Buckner, so far as this writer knows, appears in extended account in only one original printed source.[40] Certain interesting facts about this source appear in *Legends of Texas,* wherein the long Strap Buckner yarn is reprinted with some prefatory explanation.[41]

These facts, contributed to the editor of *Legends of Texas* by the daughter of N. A. Taylor, one of the authors of *The Coming Empire,* are in summary form as follows: On his journey, while in the vicinity of Lagrange, Mr. Taylor encountered a "dapper young man" who explained that Buckner's Creek was named for Strap Buckner, a young man who had come to Texas with Austin's Colony and had gained a queer reputation for good-humoredly knocking down the colonists, even Austin himself. Mr. Taylor suggested as reply that evidently Strap Buckner would not hesitate to knock down anything, even a bull. And the young man launched forth into a

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[36]Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin,* p. 279.

[37]"Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin," in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* Vol. XXI, p. 417.

[38]*Ibid.,* Vol. XXII, p. 188.

[39]J. H. Kuykendall, *loc. cit.,* p. 328

[40]H. F. McDanield and N. A. Taylor, *The Coming Empire, or Two Thousand Miles in Texas on Horseback,* pp. 49–73.

[41]J. Frank Dobie, ed., *Legends of Texas (Publications* No. III of the Texas Folk-Lore Society, 1924), pp. 118–120.

tale about Strap Buckner's bare-fisted encounter with a big black bull that occasionally terrorized the Colony. Eventually, Strap became so unpopular that he went to the vicinity of the present town of Lagrange, where he built himself a cabin and settled down to more quiet habits.

But his propensity for knocking down men drove him to this peculiar pastime once more, and this time the Indians of the community were the victims. The Indian chief gave him a horse, as a token of admiration; and the ego of Strap, inflamed by this gift and by a considerable quantity of liquor, conceived that he was world champion, with the result that he challenged everyone, including the Devil, to fight. The Devil, in the midst of a storm, answered the challenge, and of course conquered the boasting Strap. Mr. Taylor was so interested in the yarn that he made of it a marvelous folk production in a suggestively archaic style that is inimitable.

The editor of the *Legends of Texas* made a fruitless effort to find survivals of the legend in the vicinity of Lagrange. He did get the information that the country bordering the Colorado River was at one time considered wild and rough and that a generation or so ago, any crude or illiterate person was frequently characterized as having come" from high Buckner."

The legends themselves, as told by Mr. Taylor, remain to be considered and summarized. I have taken the liberty of rearranging the stories according to certain definite divisions in their content.

The Character of Strap Buckner

Strap Buckner when a youth came to Texas as one of the "original three hundred colonists." His origin no one knows, and his name "Strap" is unexplained, unless his giant stature is its explanation. He possessed the strength of ten lions, he had heavy hair as red as a flame, and he had freckles. Like many giants he was good-humored, but he had in his strength a pride that gradually became insufferable.

To give expression to this strength and pride, Strap good-naturedly went about knocking men down. If, perchance, he injured his victims, he carried them to his cabin and nursed them back to health—so that he might knock them down again. He knocked down Austin's whole Colony at least three times,

including Austin himself. It is said that he had a "genius" within him, and the "genius" was to knock men down.

Strap Buckner and the Beasts

In the early days of the Austin Colony, a black bull, known as Noche, mysteriously came and went, causing fear whenever he appeared and anxiety as to his return whenever he left. Strap, exercising his "genius" in a new way, challenged the bull to single-handed combat. Noche accepted the challenge. On the appointed day, the entire colony looked fearfully out from its windows wondering what would happen when Strap and Noche came together. With a red blanket tossed over his shoulder and with no weapons, Strap strode on to the prairie where Noche twisted his tail, pawed the earth, and bellowed mightily.

Strap, by way of imitation, pawed and roared also. Noche disliked the gesture of mockery and came at Strap "like a thunder-bolt clothed in tempest and terror." Strap held his own ground and met Noche with a resounding blow on his frontlet. Blood spurted from Noche's flaming nostrils, and Noche himself turned tail and fled, bellowing. Never more was Noche seen in the Colony!

Furthermore, as a great and successful hunter, Strap with no weapon other than his bare fist and an iron pestle, which he threw with deadly accuracy, obtained any game he attempted. Consequently, the wild cat, the bear, and the buffalo moved out of that region.

Strap's Alliance with Rum

Strap's "genius," naturally, had an astonishing reputation among the colonists. Men, women, and children got out of his way when they saw him coming. But when he made a friend of demon rum, the alarm in the community amounted almost to panic; and men assembled in armed groups whenever it was noised around that Strap Buckner and his "genius," thoroughly aroused by liquor, was in town.

The playful, kindly nature of Strap was hurt by this defensive attitude of his old-time friends; and he decided to leave San Felipe de Austin for a new and less hostile community. His old friends bade him farewell, and he wept as he returned

their parting good wishes. It is said that he had many strange adventures as he traveled from San Felipe to a branch of the Colorado River near the present town of Lagrange; but the nature of those adventures has never been revealed.

Strap Buckner and the Indians

After many adventures Strap arrived at the trading-post presided over by Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, who exchanged beads, trinkets, and liquor with the Indians for skins and furs and horses. As Strap liked the country and the liquor, he proceeded to build himself a cabin in the cedar brake and settle down. On the first day, his "genius" impelled him to knock down Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, but they recognized his great "genius" and took his blows kindly. Within a week he had knocked down all the Indian warriors within a radius of ten miles. They also revered his "genius," and instead of scalping him praised him highly. They named him Kokulblothetopoff, meaning the Red Son of Blue Thunder; and the king gave him the swiftest horse in the world, a grey bobtailed nag. The king also offered in marriage to Strap the princess Tulipita; but Strap, with the wisdom that Samson did not have, refused to have his powers weakened by a woman. Of course Tulipita pined away in silent grief.

Strap loved this free new life where the jug was ever ready to quench his thirst and the Indians were every ready to accommodate his "genius." But gradually the Indians wearied of Strap's friendly blows; and one dark night they stole away, never to return to his immediate neighborhood.

Strap Challenges the World and the Devil

In the morning, when Strap could not find his Indian friends, he mourned much as he had when he left San Felipe: "Other friends have left me before. Such is the common penalty of greatness." After weeping and fasting for two days, Strap reached for the jug—it was empty. He called his grey bobtailed nag, mounted with jug held aloft in one hand, and rode away to the trading-post, his long red hair streaming behind him. On the way he found twenty-two Indian braves in the midst of a revelry under an oak tree. Sweetly he smiled,

benignantly he laughed and dismounted—and knocked them down. At the trading post he knocked down Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall. By this time his eye was sparkling, his cheeks were flushed, and his hands were alive with desire. He drank a quart of liquor from his replenished jug, and his "genius" became vastly inspired. Having knocked down all living things, Strap began on the inanimate and knocked into a hundred pieces a clock fashioned in the shape of a portly knight. Finally, he so far forgot himself and the dignity of his "genius" as to hop up on the counter, flap his arms as a rooster flaps his wings, and crow in triumph.

A new spirit of defiance that eventually proved his downfall moved him. He called himself the champion of the world, defied all that lived, and then three times challenged the Devil. At once a deep rumbling and roaring came from the earth. The rumbling was Noche's answer to the challange. Noche had not forgotten his defeat. Strap rode away to meet the issue. As he left the trembling Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, a red monkey swung up unseen behind him; and when Strap dismounted, he noticed scratches and bloody marks on the horse's haunches, but he did not know their cause.

Night came on, and with it a violent storm that shook Strap's cabin with threats of destruction. But Strap barred windows and doors and calmly prepared his supper of bacon and hoe-cake. As he was saying grace to the inventor of delicious bacon and brown hoe-cake, an unusual blast of wind blew open one of his windows; and Strap looked up to encounter two flaming eyes glaring at him through the opened window. Strap addressed the creature as Ocelot, wild cat, and followed his insults with a stone that missed its mark. The fiery eyes continued to stare. Next he hurled his iron pestle, but it hit only the window-sill and buried itself half through the oaken barrier. The eyes and their owner disappeared; Strap barred the window more tightly than before and went on with his supper.

Suddenly a blinding sheet of lightning and the simultaneous crash of thunder startled Strap into violent expression. When he recovered from his alarm, he saw in the middle of his floor, a black figure, with a thin face and eagle-like nose, two red horns on its head, cloven feet, and fiery eyes. Its visage expressed unspeakable mischief and villainy. By way of introduction it thumbed its nose at Strap in derision. Next it drew

from behind, its long tail ending in a sharpened point, and threw it upon Strap's knee. Strap, surprised and disgusted, knocked off the tail and told his strange guest to keep his tail to himself.

The figure answered only, "Skin for skin," and tossed his tail toward the fire-place, where it caught in the mantel-piece. Strap impatiently demanded more information, and the creature answered that he had come in reply to Strap's challenges to the Devil, and that he would meet Strap in mortal combat at nine o'clock the following morning. Then he departed through the key-hole, leaving behind him a nauseating odor of brimstone.

Strap spent some time in meditation that evening; and, having put himself in the mood of calm philosophy, he went to bed and to sound sleep.

At nine o'clock the next morning the Devil appeared in the form of a skinny, ugly dwarf dancing a jig. He politely saluted Strap as a man of honor and of his word; and then together they went out into the raging storm. In the glare of an especially vivid flash of lightning the dwarf disappeared, and in his place appeared a long black cat that mewed as it trotted by Strap's side. And then in succession, as the lightning flashed and the thunder roared, the Devil changed his form from cat to sky terrier, to black bear, to the black bull Noche, and to the black imp.

Side by side these two strange kings climbed to a knoll covered by oaks. The Devil suddenly began to expand until he was one hundred and ninety feet tall and eighty feet around, with his tail increased in proportion. As he tossed his tail into the air, it caught in a black cloud and stuck there. Strap naturally objected to this latest transformation of the Devil and complained aloud of the discrepancy in their statures and might. The Devil agreed, therefore, to reduce to normal size if Strap would throw away his iron pestle. Obligingly Strap discarded his one weapon. Quickly the Devil shrank, all except his tail, which was still lodged in the black cloud.

The contest began in the likeness of a boxing affray, but suddenly the black cloud moved on, carrying the Devil's tail farther away and causing the infernal imp much pain. Strap, always the gentleman, instead of taking advantage of the situation to crush the Devil forever, volunteered to climb up and

unhitch the tail. But the Devil merely rolled himself up in the coil of his tail until he reached the cloud; then, having loosened his appendage, he jumped back to meet Strap at the place of combat.

All day the battle raged, with varying fortunes until the Devil finally overcame Strap by assuming a monstrous size that gave him the advantage. Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, with forty Indian braves, stood on the river bank and listened to the hideous sounds of battle. As night descended, they saw a great grey horse riding through the air carrying a red monkey and the limp form of a man.

The next morning, the two traders and one thousand Indian braves went to Strap's cabin, which they found closed and deserted. They went on until they came to the place of battle, a place which showed evidences of the terrific conflict, and which from that time has remained barren and bleak.

The Return of Strap Buckner

It was three months after his defeat by the Devil that Strap returned on his swift grey bob-tailed nag, appearing unexpectedly at the trading post while Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall were counting skins. His face bore a sad, far-away look; and his only words were "Skin for skin."

In fear the traders told him that he might have all their skins if he would only depart. He answered only, "Skin for skin," and went sadly to his cabin in the cedars. There he remained for three months. Three times a week he visited the trading house, where he wandered sadly about, uttering only the words "Skin for skin." He drank no whiskey. His "genius" had departed from him; and yet the traders and Indians were more afraid of him than ever; he bore the marks of another-world experience. The Medicine Man invariably sounded his big bongooree after Strap had passed by.

One night, at the end of three months, Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall and ninety Indian braves saw a blue flame across the valley in the direction of Strap's cabin. Out of the blue flame there arose a grey horse carrying on his back a gigantic man waving an iron pestle over the cowering form of a red monkey. In the morning the two traders and eleven hundred Indian warriors marched across the river to Strap's land. There they

found the ashes of his cabin. In solemn circle they wept over the sad ending of Strap Buckner, and the Medicine Man sounded his big bongooree.

The Ghost of Strap Buckner

And now the story goes that on stormy nights, when the lightnings curl and the thunders crack, when the wind howls in fury and the earth cringes in terror, the ghost of Strap Buckner, with red hair streaming behind him, rides through the air up and down the valley on his grey bob-tailed nag. Clad in a robe of sulphurous blue he blends into the misty mystery of the night and storm. In rage he shakes his streaming locks, he brandishes his iron pestle at an invisible enemy, and he speaks to no one.

The ghost of Strap Buckner long had charms of its own. The older folk delighted in recalling the deeds of the daring hero. Mothers of obstreperous babes in the Buckner Creek community had only to say in the proper tone of voice, "Strap Buckner," and the youngsters became silent and good instantly, continuing in that happy state for hours. And the cowboys are said to have adopted Strap Buckner as their patron saint.

III. History and Legend Compared

In the two preceding sections I have attempted, without comment, to give, in rather full detail, the life history of Captain Aylett C. Buckner and the legend of Strap Buckner. The final step in this study is to compare the two sets of data to discover the identity of the legendary in the historical figure.

Captain Aylett C. Buckner, a Virginian, as we have seen, came from a life of strenuous adventure in other compaigns into Austin's Colony as one of "the original three hundred" Texans. Likewise, Strap Buckner is said to have been one of "the original three hundred" Texans; but mystery is ascribed to his origin. Captain Buckner, furthermore, was one of the first white settlers in the vicinity of Lagrange and built himself a cabin in the rugged country along a tributary of the Colorado River, to which he gave his name. In the legend Strap Buckner left San Felipe and went west, likewise, to the vicinity of Lagrange, where he built himself a cabin on the stream to which he gave his name.

The name "Strap," incidentally, arose probably, as the legend suggests, from the size and physical strength of the man. Inasmuch as it was a custom for the settlers to bear nick-names indicative of some possession or some characteristic,[42] it is not entirely improbable that Captain Buckner may have had such a nick-name as "Strap," although there is no remaining evidence to substantiate the possibility.

Captain Buckner was an industrious, energetic trader, farmer, and stockraiser. For the purposes of legend, the details of occupation were unimportant; and therefore they were omitted. We are told that Strap became a hunter. In the legend the trading-post is transferred to the ownership of Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, individuals thus far eluding identification.

As an Indian fighter Captain Buckner was keen and persistent. He led the colonists in an overwhelming victory over the Carankawa Indians. No doubt the Indians all feared and avoided him. According to the legend, Strap first amused the Indians; then he astonished them; and finally he frightened them out of the region. The Indian yarns in the legend had an excellent start in the accounts of the actual experiences.

The most pivotal comparison, however, lies in the combative dispositions of both the original captain and the legendary Strap. Outstanding in the records of Captain Buckner's life is his propensity for fighting: (1) his participation in three revolutions prior to his affiliations with the Austin Colony in 1821, (2) his keen activity in Indian warfare, (3) his violent temper and its tendency toward duelling, (4) his famous quarrel with Austin. Equally outstanding in the legend of Strap is his "genius" for knocking men down, including the whole Austin Colony, even Austin himself, three times over. The transfer of stubborn, vocal quarrelsomeness to actual physical contests is thoroughly plausible in view of the fact that man has always rejoiced in pugilistic encounters.

This comparison of the essential facts about the lives and the dispositions of the historical Captain Aylett C. Buckner

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[42]Domestic animals were so scarce in the Colony that the possession of any considerable number was sufficient to name the owner, as "Cow" Cooper and "Hog" Mitchell. "Sawmill" Cooper carried his industry in his nick-name. "Mustang" Brown and "Buck" Pettus are suggestive. G. B. Cotton found himself one day to be "Great Big" Cotton.

and the legendary Strap Buckner can bring us to but one conclusion: Captain Buckner and Strap Buckner were one and the same, the latter deriving from the former.

The processes of the derivation are simple, it seems to me. Captain Aylett C. Buckner, during his eleven years in the Austin Colony, was a prominent man in every way, including his boisterous and turbulent behavior which caused himself and others so much trouble. He died a bachelor in 1832, when the Colony was still frontier and experimental. Men still struggled with primitive conditions of living, and their imaginations and concepts were still determined by pioneer facts and psychology.

As the years passed and as they assembled around their fireplaces on winter nights or met at the trading-squares in summer, they talked, as men ever do, of the yesterdays in their experience, that is, of the early days in the Colony. Of course they talked about Captain Buckner and of his wild daring. And then, as more years passed, fiction got into the growing stories, as ever happens, until the folk-creation, the folk-hero, Strap Buckner almost replaced the historical Captain Aylett C. Buckner.

But the legends were a matter of oral tradition; they were merely the fire-side yarns of a pioneer group; no one wrote them down perhaps until Mr. Taylor heard some of them and gave them printed form. In the meantime, the historical Captain Buckner was being preserved in *The Austin Papers* and in a few other written records. The preservation, scanty as it is in both cases, is sufficient to indicate how the epical folk-hero, Strap Buckner, arose out of the turbulent pioneer hero, Captain Aylett C. Buckner.

JESSE HOLMES, THE "FOOL-KILLER"

By Ernest E. Leisy

Legends concerning a "fool-killer" seem prevalent enough in Texas, but they are not commonly, I believe, identified with a definite individual as is the case with the deeds of Paul Bunyan. There is, however, authority for connecting the deeds of the well-known dolt-destroyer with one Jesse Holmes, who flourished at least as long ago as the Civil War. But how he got his name, and what was the range of his activities we do not know.

In the files of the *Southern Literary Messenger* for 1862, I have found an interesting reference to Jesse Holmes on page 693:

> Jesse Holmes is the name of the "Fool Killer," employed by the Milton (N. C.) *Chronicle*. He is supposed to carry a great club, with which he beats out the brains of fools. Since the war broke out, all the fools he has killed have been knaves. As for example:
>
> In Pittsylvania I nabbed a "patriotic" lark who charged soldiers five dollars a piece for taking them packages of clothing. You see he was going to Winchester anyhow, and a parcel of neighbours wishing to send their sons clothing, etc., put them in a big box and paid the freight to Richmond, from which point to Winchester the box, as I was informed, went free, my hero, having little or no trouble with it; arriving there he made each soldier shell out five dollars on the bundle. My indignation was so great, that on collaring him, I walked into him with my club without pausing for explanation or to learn his name, and made him "walk-talk ginger-blue," get over on "tother side of Jordan," where the road is a hard one to travel.

To this the *Messenger* adds: "When Jesse is out of employment, let him come to Richmond. What would he do with a man who would carry on Sunday a barrel of snacks—each snack composed of a slice of meat, between two slices of bread—and sell them to General Lee's soldiers at a dollar a piece? What would he do with a man who would boast that he had made $65 on a barrel of apples, sold to the soldiers? Such a man is said to live in Richmond."

O. Henry was familiar with the Jesse Holmes legends, as he indicates in the opening of his story, "The Fool Killer" (in

The Voice of the City.) "Down South," writes O. Henry, "whenever any one perpetrates some particularly monumental piece of foolishness everybody says: 'Send for Jesse Holmes.'

"Jesse Holmes is the Fool-Killer. Of course he is a myth, like Santa Claus, and Jack Frost and General Prosperity and all those concrete conceptions that are supposed to represent an idea that Nature has failed to embody. The wisest of the Southrons cannot tell you whence comes the Fool-Killer's name; but few and happy are the households from the Roanoke to the Rio Grande in which the name of Jesse Holmes has not been pronounced or invoked. Always with a smile, and often with a tear, he is summoned to his official duty. A busy man is Jesse Holmes."

Perhaps someone else will recall other activities of the "Fool Killer," and someone may even be wise enough to venture to suggest whence he got his name.

Since writing the foregoing, the author has had a letter from Mr. R. R. Clark, of Stephenville, N. C., as follows:

> Fifty years ago, when I entered a country printing office to learn the printer's trade, the editor, who was easily peeved and disposed to be cynical, often made reference to the Fool Killer and the much work that awaited him in that community. So far as I know the only publication at that time making a feature of the Fool Killer was the one quoted by the *Southern Literary Messenger*—the Milton (N. C.) *Chronicle*. The paper was published at Milton, county seat of Caswell County, North Carolina, on the Virginia line. The period at which I heard talk of the Fool Killer and the Milton *Chronicle* was about eighteen years after the date quoted by the *Southern Literary Messenger*. So the *Chronicle* must have featured the Fool Killer over a long period. I think the same man, whose name was Evans, continued as editor of the paper for many years. When I began in a newspaper office fifty years ago he was then and for some years afterward referred to by other papers as "Father Evans" and was presumably quite an old man. He was very outspoken and independent and his paper, for a small paper in a very small town, attracted attention. He was evidently quite original. His stuff was much copied and when he wrote something that went the rounds he would say that "it had legs." If some one told an unusual story, Father Evans was accustomed to ask, "How much did he have on?" intimating that one who saw unusual things was drunk.
>
> I am under the impression that he ran a wooden cut of a man with a club, which he labeled, "Jesse Holmes, the Fool Killer," and his manner of suggesting work for Jesse was as described in the extract

you have. When I became editor of *The Landmark* I used on occasion, remembering Jesse Holmes, the Fool Killer, to mention that there was work for him if he could be revived. I never knew whether Jesse originated with Editor Evans, was a creation of the Milton *Chronicle*, or whether he got the idea from another, as is possible. So far as I know, the Milton *Chronicle* was the only paper in which Jesse Holmes, Fool Killer, had a run and that was under the authorship of Mr. Evans. I have no doubt that he got the idea elsewhere, although I can give no good reason for denying him the idea of original creation. But whether or not he was the original creator, Editor Evans was quite original and it is not impossible that he was the creator of the character that he gave so long a run and that seems to have died with him.

Says Fred A. Olds, of the North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh: "The Confederate soldiers talked about this Jesse. He was known prior to the Civil War and continued to be known as late as 1875. He played many imaginary pranks, or practical jokes, some of them very rough."

FINDING FOLK-LORISTS

By Rebecca W. Smith

In a very special sense, folk-lorists are born and not made. While the collection and preservation of folk-lore oftentimes is the task of scholars and researchers, the ultimate preserver and transmitter of such traditions is the person whose roots go deep into his native soil, the one who has learned his folk-lore unconsciously during his formative years. Consequently, the collector who has been born to a rich heritage of memories, communicative relatives, and neighborhood traditions is the early bird who should—and generally does—get the folk-loric worm. Migratory collectors find themselves obliged to watch and wait a long while in the land of their adoption before they are able to discern the real thing in communal wisdom when they see it.

It happens that I am an adopted Texan, having lived and taught in the state about ten years. And although I can lay claim to a genuine interest in folk-lore, I have discovered in the past decade the force of the truths with which I preface this article. Whereas a born folk-lorist, like Sir Walter Scott, is doubtless fairly beset on his daily rounds by the wealth of "leads" and clues to folk materials ready for his interpretation and re-telling, I have found that fresh, hitherto untold material in this field is a fairly shy bird to catch despite my endeavors to sprinkle salt properly on its tail.

Yet I continually know many people who know people who know folk-lore. Especially is this true of the students in my classes, many of whom, when interrogated, casually report pioneer grandfathers, treasure legends in their home towns, family fairy tales, and the like. In short, as a folk-lorist my best opportunities are in the classroom, and my greatest finds are my students themselves. My interest in collecting the traditions of Texas best expresses itself in finding folk-lorists.

To be sure, the encouraging of young people to go home and listen to the old folks, and then to write down what they hear is a secondary and rather humble contribution toward the ultimate goal of the Texas Folk-Lore Society; but it has the advantage of being practicable and perennial. Any teacher of

English or history in either college or high school can direct a class of students in collecting folk-lore without undue effort on his own part and thereby secure tangible results that have a permanent value.

My class in American Literature at Texas Christian University for 1928–1929 consisted of twenty-five upperclass students. In previous years I had made a habit of encouraging members of this "English 36" class, as it is familiarly known on the campus, to write their required semester papers in the field of Texas folk-lore or of the literature of the Southwest. Two of the papers had been published, one in *Frontier Times* and one in the *West Texas Historical and Scientific Society Publications*. In the fall of 1928 I was led to attempt a larger experiment, for the Texas Folk-Lore Society was to meet in Fort Worth the following April. I proposed to the class that they make original investigation in folk-lore for their spring papers. The choice was optional with them, but I invited Newton Gaines, the President of the Society, and Mrs. Mary Daggett Lake, the best posted of Tarrant County folk-lorists, to visit the class in order to arouse as much interest as possible among the students. Mr. Gaines defined folk-lore for them, and outlined the aims of the Society, while Mrs. Lake told of some of her own finds, and suggested subjects in and around Fort Worth. At the end of the period each student who was interested filled out a card indicating the possible lines of investigation he might undertake. I placed the complete files of the *Publications* of the Texas Folk-Lore Society on a special shelf in our university library.

Twenty-two students originally agreed to participate in the project; but by March 15 the group dropped to fourteen, each of whom verified his individual plan by a report of what he had accomplished to date. Fourteen out of twenty-five were enlisted as volunteer folk-lorists—not a bad showing, I thought.

Every teacher can fill in from his own knowledge the number of individual conferences we had during the next five weeks, and the times we read and re-read drafts of the material. But it may be surprising to know that we actually conferred by mail with the Secretary of the Society himself regarding some of our papers. I required each student to compile the material with footnotes, giving credit to the persons he had consulted, locating the geographical references, and fixing the

approximate dates of the versions of the stories. I found that the most exacting part of my own share in the work was teaching students to fix the responsibility for every item in their material on someone, somewhere, sometime. Of the three typed copies of each paper, one was presented to the Secretary of the Society, one was filed in our university library, and the student kept one for himself.

The following list of titles indicates the range and something of the quality of our findings:

A Texas Version of Some Irish Folk and Fairy Tales ("The Three Castles"; "The Black Cat"; "The Three Swordsmen"; "The Fisherman from Balishannon"; "King Conner's Three Horses"; "The Adventurer") ..... Cecelia Byrne

I. *Rockwall Stories;* II. *Treasure and Ghost Stories from Dallas County* ("The Two Strangers"; "The Haunted Farm"; "The Ghost in the Thicket") ..... Frances Caldwell

Tales, Terms, and Nicknames in the Texas Oil Fields ..... Margarete Carpenter

Legends and Tales ("The Dallas Sleepy Hollow Legend"; "The House of Death"; "A Wholesale Robbery"; "Uncle William Furrh Attends a Wedding"; "In the Third Box Car"; "Buck and Turk") ..... Frances Dacus.

Treasure Tales and Ghost Stories of Ellis County ("The Lost Treasure"; "The Story of the Hidden Treasure"; "A True Ghost Story"; "The Haunted Bridge"; "A Lone Grave"; "The Headless Ghost") ..... Crystal Daly

Legends and Stories from Crockett County ("Stories that an Old Chilean Told"; "Legend of Penos Blanco"; Legend of the Peak"; "A Cave Story"; "A Teamster Yarn") ..... Lucile Ingham

I. *Ghost Tales* ("The Two Ghosts"; "A Black Cat Tale"; "Old Sheep Ranch"; "A Haunted House"; "A Keller Ghost Tale"); II. *A Confederate Yarn* ..... Vista Ray Jackson

Tall Tales from East Texas ..... Moselle Johnson

More Fishback Yarns ..... Virginia Knox

I. *Kentucky Stories* ("The Watery Grave"; "The Headless Man"; "Revenge"); II. *Tennessee Stories* ("The Old Woman Who Was an Owl"; "The Early Morning Horseback Rider"); III. *Tarrant County Stories* ("A Haunted House"; "A Haunted Lane"); IV. *The Angry Sea Captain* ..... Georgia Pruitt

The Wishes of William McKee.....Dorritt Moses

Humanizing the Fifties Through an Old Account Book.....Josephine Terrell Smith

Stories of Indian Atrocities.....Lena Stephens

Early Times in Iowa Park.....Gladys Van Horn

The classification of this mass of material reveals many types of folk-lore: ghost tales, buried treasure stories, legendary place stories, negro yarns, tales of lovers, "tall tales," oil field lore, Texas versions of the folk-lore of other sections and lands, and historical material. There is literally no telling what sort of fish one will catch in his net when he lets it down among a classroom of students from all over the state.

Besides the somewhat mechanical details of procedure which I have outlined, I reached a few general conclusions about the finding of folk-lorists in the classroom. In the first place, a file of the *Publications* of the Texas Folk-Lore Society is essential. The students must read these volumes, and browse among them. Before he can proceed with much intelligence to record his own findings, the student must familiarize himself with the recordings of others. Again, one must not try to distinguish very sharply between historical material and folk-lore while the youngsters are in the process of collecting. The distinction is none too clear among seasoned scholars, and is very vague and confusing to beginners. Besides, historical material can be weeded out easily enough, and oftentimes used in other ways. In the list I have given, for example, Josephine Terrell Smith's study of the old account book is probably the most cleverly written paper in the group, although it is hardly folk-lore. Finally, I was much interested in the amount of material available in Texas which has been transferred from other states and countries. These borrowed strains are a rich addition to our stores of legends.

When it comes to evaluating these papers, it must be apparent that much of the material is of secondary importance. Many of the tales are simply variants of well known published ones; others are immature in the telling and in details. The Crockett County group is, perhaps, the most complete collection, although Ellis County stories are a good second. The most unique contribution is undoubtedly Cecelia Byrne's Irish

fairy tales, told by her mother, a native of County Donegal.

The real value of our class project lies outside the material itself. It lies in the fact that the students enjoyed making the investigations, and took keen pleasure in attending the meetings of the society. For fourteen students, at least, literature was transferred from the printed page to its living sources among the people; and for them the wisdom of the folk can never again be a sealed book. For me the project was interesting because it netted fourteen folk-lorists. Granting that they are amateurs, and not yet confirmed devotees, they have been initiated into the work and pleasure of collecting traditions. Incidentally, five of them joined the Society. There was for me also a reward in the cordial interest of the officers of the Society, who apparently do not feel in the least inclined to scorn the miscellaneous contributions of the classroom to Texas folk-lore. And I have the further satisfaction of believing that a good many of these students will, in their turn, become finders of folk-lorists. As I write, I am enjoying a glow of vicarious pride over an historical feature article which appeared last Sunday in one of our large city papers. It was written by an ex-member of English 36, who is teaching her first year in a small Texas high school, and is working with her pupils in gathering the traditions of the town.

Suppose each of my fourteen folk-lorists found fourteen folk-lorists—that would be one hundred and ninety-six; and if each of them—

RECENT RESEARCH IN BALLADRY AND FOLK SONGS

L. W. Payne, Jr.

In selecting a *terminus a quo* for a consideration of the general trend of recently published research in the field of popular literature of the song and ballad types, we cannot, it seems to me, choose a better point of beginning than the year 1921, which marks the publication of that very stimulating book, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* by Professor Louise Pound. It will not be necessary to summarize the arguments of that well known work nor to enter into any extended discussion of the admittedly unsolvable problem of poetic origins; but since all present-day students of popular literature owe much to Miss Pound's book, both for its orientating content and for its thoroughly sane and sound method of attack on the whole problem of research in popular materials, it seems to me that in tracing the tendencies of research in popular balladry during the present century we may safely set this book up as one of the significant landmarks. Another work which appeared in 1921 helps also to fix this date as a significant one in the specified field, namely, Professor Hyder E. Rollins's carefully compiled *Analytical Index to Ballad Entries (1557–1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London,* first published in *Studies of Philology,* Vol. XXI, January, 1921. It is needless to say that in the sections which follow I make no pretense of recording all of the recent studies in folk-songs and ballads, but merely attempt to select good examples of the several types of research in the specified field.

I. Collections and General Studies

The collecting and publishing of material goes on in increasing volume from year to year. While the miscellaneous or conglomerate type of collection continues to appear, the tendency in recently published collections turns clearly toward the study of single groups or single types of songs and ballads—collections of the songs of more or less well defined or isolated classes or races, such for example as the songs of the lumberjacks of Maine and of the shanty-boys of the timbered regions

of the Middle West, as in Professor Gray's *Songs of the Maine Lumberjacks* (1925), the late Professor Rickaby's *Ballads and Songs of the Shanty-boy* (1926), and Mrs. Eckstrom and Miss Smyth's *Minstrelsy of Maine* (1927), which last contains songs of both the woods and the coast country of Maine; collections of negro songs of various kinds, as in R. E. Kennedy's *Mellows* (1925), H. W. Odom and Guy B. Johnson's *The Negro and His Songs* (1925) and *Negro Workaday Songs* (1925), Miss Dorothy Scarborough's *On the Trail of Negro Folk-Songs* (1925), and Professor Newman I. White's *American Negro Folk-Songs* (1928), this last with its 638 entries and its bibliography of 231 items being the most comprehensive and satisfactory volume yet published in its special field; collections of sea shanties, as in Frank Shay's *Deep Sea Shanties* (1925), Joanna C. Colcord's *Roll and Go: Songs of American Sailors* (1924), Professor MacKenzie's *Ballads and Sea Songs of Nova Scotia* (1924); Henry W. Shoemaker's *North Pennsylvania Minstrelsy* (1923), a conglomerate but valuable collection from the mountain regions of Pennsylvania; collections of survivals of English and Scottish ballads in America in such books as Professor John H. Cox's *Folk-Songs of the South* (1925), Professor Reed Smith's *South Carolina Ballads* (1928), Professor A. P. Hudson's *Specimens of Mississippi Folk-Lore* (1928), Professor Arthur Kyle Davis's *Traditional Ballads in Virginia* (1929), and Phillips Barry, Fanny H. Eckstrom, and Mary Winslow Smyth's *British Ballads from Maine* (1929).

The first three of the five volumes last named contain local American songs and ballads as well as traditional English and Scottish survivals, but the last two volumes are born of the same impulse, namely, the desire to collect the older traditional ballads, segregate them, and make a special study of the forms in which they are still circulating in America. The two volumes came out almost simultaneously from the Harvard Press and the Yale Press, respectively. Professor Davis's Virginia volume of 652 pages reports 51 ballads in 480 versions with 148 melodies. The Barry-Eckstrom-Smyth volume reports in its 535 pages 56 ballads and traces of 25 more found in Maine and Nova Scotia. Previous findings of old ballads surviving in this country were 37 reported by Campbell and Sharp in *English Folk-Songs of the Southern Appalachians* (1917), 16 by Mackenzie from Nova Scotia, 33 by J. H. Cox

from West Virginia, 14 by Reed Smith from South Carolina, and 24 by A. P. Hudson from Mississippi. Professor Davis says the Virginia Folk-Lore Society has found versions of more than half of the 92 separate ballads so far recorded, but he doubtless failed to take into account the 56 versions from Maine and Nova Scotia which were just at the moment being printed in the Barry-Eckstrom-Smyth volume.

The increased interest in folk-songs and ballads is shown also in the many entertaining illustrated books with numerous musical scores prepared for the general reader, such as Carl Sandburg's *The American Song Bag* (1927), Charles J. Finger's *Frontier Ballads* (1927), Lily Y. Cohen's *Lost Spirituals* (1928), and Frank Shay's collections of boisterous ballads and drinking songs in *My Pious Friends and Drunken Companions* (1927), *More Pious Friends and Drunken Companions* (1928), and *Drawn from the Wood* (1929), but entertaining and valuable as these are in their way, they need not detain us here.

Most of these collections contain introductions which show the collector's *penchant* for theorizing and explaining just how the songs were made, sung, disseminated, and collected. The tendency to secure and record tunes as well as the words of the songs is certainly in the right direction, for it is a universally recognized fact that without its tune a song or ballad is but a poor half loaf. The later collections show a consistent increase in the number and variety and accuracy of the tunes recorded. This increased interest in the collection of folk tunes has led to another advance, namely the effort to secure a more scientifically accurate record of the music of folk-songs and ballads. The use of the phonograph for taking records of ballads has not made the progress or produced the results so confidently predicted for it some years ago. Doubtless many records have been made and filed away in libraries and museums for future reference and study, but little use has been made of such records by scholars in their study of folk songs. The literary worker is not accustomed, in most cases not equipped, to turn to mechanical methods or devices to aid him in his researches. He turns instinctively to personal sources or to printed or written records for his materials, and hence he has made little use of folk-songs and ballads thus "captured alive," to repeat the familiar phrase of the enthusiasts who years ago proposed

phonograph records as the scientific and definitive method of gathering folk-songs.

One book offering a new approach to the study of folk-songs through the use of scientific and mechanical apparatus is the monograph by Professor Milton Metfessel, *Phonophotography in Folk Music* (1928). This new method of approach was developed in the department of experimental psychology at the University of Iowa. Dr. Metfessel describes a portable sound-photograph camera, which records the vibrations of the singer's voice by means of curves traced by a light ray falling on a moving-picture film. He gives numerous charts and illustrations of his records. The method he explains is, however, so complex and technical that the average collector will never make use of it.

II. Special Studies

What is all this collecting to lead to? What is the scholar's function, now that the amount of collected materials has become so imposing? Are we getting anywhere with our studies and researches? Can we hope to get anywhere, to get anything nailed down and fixed, to reach any dependable conclusions by merely going on collecting and jumping to quick and unwarranted generalizations without subjecting this material to a close and careful scientific, scholarly, and comprehensive examination? It seems to me we cannot. One hopeful sign observed in the more recent studies is the tendency to make intensive examinations of single ballads or songs, following them in all their vagaries and transformations, and discovering as far as possible their forbears and offshoots and decadent or crescent progeny. In that direction lie brighter prospects, it seems to me, for the settling of the vexed problems of origin, transmission, interfusion, interrelationship, and distribution of types. The more of these thorough and dependable studies of single ballads or types we have, the better we can eventually understand and evaluate the whole corpus of both songs and ballads. Even questions of poetic origin may then be talked about, if not settled, on the basis of ascertained facts, and the warring words "communal" and "individual" may lie down together, like the scripturally proverbial wolf and lamb, in

peace. Professor H. M. Belden of Missouri long ago presented a good example of this tracing down of an individual song in his "A Study of Contemporary Balladry" ("The Meeks Murder Song") in *The Mid-West Quarterly,* I (1913). This type of single ballad study may be found, with varying application of scientific methods of research of course, in many of the volumes listed above, such as Mrs. Eckstrom's excellent study of "The Jam on Gerry's Rock" under the title of "The Pursuit of a Ballad Myth," pp. 176–198 of *Minstrelsy of Maine;* Professor Reed Smith's Chapter VIII of his introduction to *South Carolina Ballads,* entitled "Five Hundred Years of 'The Maid Freed from the Gallows' "; the study of some forty or more Texas versions of "The Frog's Courting," by L. W. Payne, Jr., in *Publications of the Texas Folk-Lore Society,* No. V, 1926; and, finally, Guy B. Johnson's *John Henry: Tracing Down a Negro Ballad,* recently published by the University of North Carolina Press (1929).

This last-named study, which is the completest and most satisfactory of its kind that has yet appeared—being extended to the dignity of a book of 155 pages—deserves a special paragraph. Here we have a single theme carefully traced in its various traditional forms of legend, work song, and ballad, a theme which has had a surprisingly wide vogue and influence and one which is still vigorously alive—yet in the making, so to speak—and hence one from which we may learn much concerning the genesis, development, dissemination, and ultimate social aspects of a theme as it is handled by a group of folk. Mr. Johnson has gone carefully into the question of the authenticity of the legend, following the trail of John Henry into every nook and corner that beckoned, trying desperately to drive the legend to its lair and capture it bodily, only to have to confess in the end that he has failed to reconcile completely all the conflicting testimony. But he has reached, at least in his own mind, the positive conclusion that there was a real steel-driving negro named John Henry, who beat a steam drill down and died from the strain, and he has almost reached a positive conclusion as to the time, place, and circumstances of the contest. Moreover, he has clearly demonstrated that the John Henry and the John Hardy legends and songs are separate and distinct entities, though they have been at times fused in the process of transmission. Interesting as are the findings of this study, the

method of the investigation is of equal value and significance to the student of folk materials. Mr. Johnson apparently has left no avenue of approach untried, no matter how much time and trouble each lead may have demanded in the pursuit. He gives both positive and negative evidence without prejudice, always keeping his own mind open for the truth and nothing but the truth. Besides the usual devices of letters, interviews, personal visits to localities, and the like employed by other investigators, Mr. Johnson has conducted John Henry contests in negro schools, advertised in negro papers, and gathered together and studied the ten or a dozen commercial phonograph records of the John Henry and John Hardy songs. So far as I have observed, this is the first application by a scholar of the one-time widely discussed proposal to use the phonograph records for research in folk songs. All in all the *John Henry* volume is a model of what can be done in the way of research in studying a single item in contemporary balladry.

Other special types of research which hold out promising and helpful results for the scholar and serious student of balladry are (1) comparative studies of identical or similar ballads in different languages and countries; (2) studies of sources and analogues in the work of known authors for their influence on folk ballads and traditional songs; (3) historical studies of sequences and parallels and recorded versions to prove the genesis and evolution and history of songs and ballads. An example of the first type may be seen in Professor Archer Taylor's study "Das Schloss in Oërsterreich" in *Modern Language Notes,* XLII, April, 1927, in which he made a close comparative study of the French "Les Écoliers Perdus" (ca. 1259), the German, "Das Schloss in Oërsterreich" (1609), and the Scotch "The Twa Sons o' Owsenford" (1829), as reported in Child's No. 72. Professor H. M. Belden's excellent extended study of the influence of Boccaccio and Hans Sachs on the ballad called "The Bramble Briar," in *PMLA,* XXXIII, 1918, is the best example I know of in the second type. Professor Belden proved positively that the ballad had its source in a story from the *Decameron* and that Hans Sachs and others (including Keats with his "Isabella, or The Pot of Basil") retold it in verse, and that from these sources it floated out into various traditional forms and is still alive in Scotland and America.

Professor G. L. Kittredge has done a large amount of scholarly research in tracing the history of American ballads and songs. Perhaps the best example of his work in the third type mentioned above, is the essay which he contributed to *Bibliographical Essays: a Tribute to Wilberforce Eames,* in 1924. His contribution to that volume was "The Ballad of Lovewell's Fight," pp. 93–127, an essay which not only proves its points but clearly illustrates what patient research and wide acquaintance with historical and literary materials may do in clearing up problems of authorship, origin, and dissemination of popular songs. Professor Kittredge has done a vast deal of work of this kind which does not appear directly under his own name. Witness his learned and elucidating notes in the Tolman-Eddy articles on "Traditional Texts and Tunes" in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* XXIX (1916) and XXV (1922), where his extensive notes appear in the bracketed material throughout the articles. Similarly elucidating notes may be seen in certain material attached to Professor A. P. Hudson's recent collection, "Ballads and Songs from Mississippi," *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* XXXIX, 1926, this time printed apart and under Professor Kittredge's signature. Here are his two notes, one on "A Lying Song" and another on "The Song of Mary Blane."

III. The "Individual" versus the "Communal" Theory

Finally, we may ask what is the present status of the much discussed and tantalizing problem of poetic origins and of the genesis of ballads. In almost every study that has appeared recently, whether of collection or of interpretation, the problem pops up in one way or another. It seems to me that every serious student of popular song material, whether he be a communalist or an individualist at heart, has long ago given up the problem as unsolvable, or at least undemonstrable in the face of the present lack of dependable evidence as to just how music and song and ballad arose in early times among the primitive races or even in more recent times and in certain well known periods of literary history. Practically all supporters of the communal theory have greatly modified their views, and the imaginary pictures of the "composing throng" at work in the making of a song or ballad are no longer being

painted so frequently or so confidently. I suspect, however, that many of our teachers in the high schools and even in the colleges are still innocently and confidently presenting the the communal theory of origins, following the material in the editorial introductions to certain older and widely used textbooks on the popular ballad. The "individualists" have long stoutly called for a single convincing example of the epic or story ballad, either in the older or the contemporary balladry, that can be clearly shown to have been created by a composing throng.

A rather unconvincing document in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* XXXIV, 1921, presented by Atcheson L. Hench under the imposing title of "Communal Composition of Ballads in the A. E. F." brings forward the far-famed but ephemeral "Hinkie Dinkie Parlezvous" as an example in support of communal authorship. Professor Louise Pound in an article in a later number of the same journal (Vol. XXXVI, 1924) effectively replies that the old English and Scottish ballads are not "Hinkie Dinkies" and that there is no safe deduction on communal authorship to be drawn from a comparison of a composite satirical lampoon such as "Hinkie Dinkie Parlezvous" with the compactly constructed, story-telling English and Scottish ballads of 17th, 18th, and 19th century vintage. Her conclusion is convincing and final: "A permanent communal text, the result of composite authorship, or representing in any valid sense some community, is never achieved." The late Professor H. H. Tolman, in a double-barreled article in the *PMLA,* June, 1927, entitled *"Mary Hamilton"; the Group Authorship of Ballads,* elucidates the confusion of two ballads. He frankly admits in this first half of his article that the individual authorship of most ballads has now been clearly proved. But then, in the second part of his article, he goes on to take up the old bone of contention and offers an example of an epic or story-telling ballad which was actually composed by a group of men in recent times. He tells us that one of his pupils reported a humorous folk yarn of the enormously exaggerated type—the story of a mosquito that ate one of a pair of oxen and was later found in a tree picking his teeth with one of the horns of Jerry, the devoured ox, and at the same time ringing Jerry's bell to call up Joe in order that he might complete his breakfast. Several men, one of whom

could not read or write, got together and decided to make a song of the jest. Professor Tolman prints the song as an example of a story ballad actually composed in the communal manner. While this song is an example of conscious collaboration, it would no more prove the communal theory of ballad origin than the conscious collaboration of three or four Elizabethan dramatists would prove the communal origin of the drama.

At this point mention should be made of Professor Pound's article "The Term Communal," in *PMLA*, XXXIX (June, 1924), in which she finally rejects the term "communal" not only in the sense of "communal composition" of ballads, but also in the sense "communal re-creation," preferring the term "traditional re-creation" for the process which goes on after a composition begins to be molded by various hands in its transmission from generation to generation. "The changes are not the product of a *gesammtgeist*," she says. "There is no communal text; there are many shifting texts in the mouths of many singers. The term 'communal' is without real validity even when we use it, not of the creation of ballads, but re-creation or modification." In this connection also, mention should be made of another thought-provoking theoretical article, that of Miss Martha W. Beckwith of Vassar, in the same number of *PMLA* (June, 1924), "The English Ballad Form." In this article Miss Beckwith makes a close study of the relationship of the folk-tale and the dialogue-song or story-ballad.

Another theoretical article which has attracted considerable attention since it appeared is Professor Gordon Hall Gerould's essay in *Modern Philology*, XXI, August, 1923, called "The Making of Ballads." He takes the position that there are usually several "good" versions of many of the old ballads, that each of these "good" versions is equally authentic, that the several "good" versions cannot be pieced together, and that there is in reality no ultimate or original text for a ballad, or if so, it is of comparatively little importance. "Therefore," he says, "since the variations were made by different singers of the ballad, they may properly be said to be the result of communal tradition and communal activity." Professor Gerould further argues that the conditions which produced the earlier "good" ballads have been so changed that "good" ballads can no

longer be made. While agreeing substantially with the majority of the conclusions in this article, Professor Louise Pound, in her article "A Recent Theory of Ballad Making," *PMLA*, June, 1929, regrets that the author "did not take into account the fact that most of the ideas he advances were held by his predecessors."

The change of attitude on the problem of ballad origins may be noted in the very excellent, though brief, treatment of the ballads in the new *Encyclopedia Britannica* (14th edition) in which Professor George Gregory-Smith of Queen's College, Belfast, and Professor Louise Pound of the University of Nebraska sign their initials to the English and American sections respectively. Needless to say, these writers simply present the facts of their respective topics without prejudice; but Professor Gregory-Smith goes rather fully into the present status of the problem of ballad origin and unhesitatingly pronounces in favor of the individual as opposed to the communal theory.

Finally, in 1925, under the auspices of the Buchan Club, Aberdeen, appeared *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs*, material collected in Aberdeenshire by the late Gavin Grieg and edited by Professor Alexander Keith of Aberdeen University. This is, in my opinion, the most substantial contribution to the study and the materials of the older Scotch ballads and ballad music that has been made since the appearance of Professor Child's monumental work. In his introduction to this volume, Professor Keith defends the authenticity of the Peter Buchan manuscripts, including the Rankin additions heretofore so vigorously attacked by certain writers on English and Scottish ballads; he pays high tribute to the authenticity and value of the work of Gavin Grieg and his collaborator, the late Reverend J. B. Duncan; and finally he records his unequivocal endorsement of the individual theory of ballad origins.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH, AND SIXTEENTH ANNUAL MEETINGS (1928–1930) OF THE TEXAS FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

I. 1928

The Society met Friday evening, April 27, in the Y.M.C.A. Auditorium, across from the University of Texas Campus, at Austin, Colonel M. L. Crimmins, the president, presiding. The program follows:

FRIDAY EVENING

President's Address: *Some Similarities in Folk-Lore*, M. L. Crimmins, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio.

Br'er Rabbit in Africa, T. C. Vinson, Austin. (Paint Lick, Ky.)

How Mr. Polecat Got His Name, Kate Stoner O'Connor, Victoria. (Read by proxy.)

Folk-Lore Relating to Texas Birds, John K. Strecker, Baylor University, Waco.

Some Notes on Recent Treatments of Negro Folk-Lore, Robert Adger Law, University of Texas, Austin.

The Play Party in Oklahoma, B. A. Botkin, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla. (Read by title.)

The Headless Rider of Bosque County, G. T. Bludworth, State Department of Education, Austin.

After a subscription luncheon Saturday noon in the University Cafeteria, the Society met in the archaeological museum of Garrison Hall for a business session. This over, Professor J. E. Pearce, of the University of Texas, talked on *Explorations in Texas Archaeology*. Following the talk, automobiles carried fifty or seventy-five people to examine Indian mounds being excavated under Professor Pearce's directions at Cedar Park.

The program was concluded Saturday evening in the Y.M.C.A. auditorium with papers as follows:

Some Characteristics of Cowboy Songs (singing), Newton Gaines, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.

The Woman Who Lost Her Soul, Jovita González, St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio.

The Genius of Pecos Bill, Mody C. Boatright, University of Texas, Austin.

Mr. Fishback of the Sulphurs, J. M. Deaver, El Paso. (Read by proxy.)

Bowie and the Bowie Knife, Frank Dobie, University of Texas, Austin.

Officers for 1928–1929 were elected as follows:

PRESIDENT, Newton Gaines, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.
VICE-PRESIDENTS, John K. Strecker, Baylor University, Waco; Jovita Gonzaléz, St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio; B. O. Baker, Dallas.
COUNCILLORS, J. Evetts Haley, Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, Canyon; J. E. Pearce, University of Texas; Gates Thomas, Southwest Texas State Teachers' College, San Marcos; L. W. Payne, Jr., University of Texas.
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY AND TREASURER, Fannie Ratchford, University of Texas.
SECRETARY AND EDITOR, J. Frank Dobie, Austin.

By vote of the Society annual dues were raised from $1 to $2, and the price of life-membership from $25 to $50.

II. 1929

For the first time in a good many years the Society met away from Austin. The meeting was at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Newton Gaines presiding. It began with a subscription dinner in the T.C.U. Cafeteria, Friday evening, April 19, and concluded with the Saturday afternoon session. The program follows.

FRIDAY EVENING

President's Address: *Ford Epigrams*, Newton Gaines, Texas Christian University.
Legend and Song of the Texas-Mexican Folk, Jovita González, St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio, accompanied by Argentina Blanco, San Antonio.
The Onza of the Sierra Madre, Frank Dobie, University of Texas.
The Texas Folk-Lore Society, L. W. Payne, Jr., University of Texas.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Horse and Human Remedies of the Old-Time Texas Ranches, Frost Woodhull, San Antonio.
Ancient Choctow Beliefs Regarding Twins, Lillian T. Shaver, Dallas. (Read by title.)
The Lost Honey Mines of Texas, H. B. Parks, San Antonio. (Read by proxy.)
Uncle Ned Milam—Texas Munchausen, Mrs. Seb F. Caldwell, Mount Pleasant. (Read by proxy.)
The Legend of Old Fort Phantom Hill, Mamie Wynne Cox, Dallas. (Read by title.)

Finding Folk-Lorists, Rebecca Smith, Texas Christian University.
Myths in Oil-Finding, David Donoghue, Fort Worth.
A Texas John Wilkes Booth, Mary Daggett Lake, Fort Worth.
A Study in Folk-Words, Artemisia Bryson, Texas Christian University.
A Texas Version of "Lord Thomas and Fair Elinor," Lowel Bodiford, Texas Christian University.

At the business session officers for 1929–1930 were elected as follows:

PRESIDENT, John K. Strecker, Baylor University, Waco.
VICE-PRESIDENTS, Frost Woodhull, San Antonio; Mrs. Bruce Reid, Port Arthur; Rebecca Smith, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.
COUNCILLORS, David Donoghue, Fort Worth; J. Evetts Haley and L. W. Payne, Jr., The University of Texas, Austin.
SECRETARY AND EDITOR, J. Frank Dobie, The University of Texas, Austin.
TREASURER, Byron Shipp, The University of Texas, Austin.

Up to 1924 the office of Secretary and Treasurer of the Texas Folk-Lore Society were combined. In 1924 a new office denominated Recording Secretary and Treasurer was created, while the other half of the old office was fixed as Secretary and Editor. After serving as Recording Secretary and Treasurer for four years, Miss Fannie Ratchford announced that she was going to Europe for a year and could, therefore, serve no longer. The Society abolished the office, created the office of Treasurer, and combined the secretarial duties in the Secretary and Treasurer.

The Secretary announced that there would be no publication for 1929 but that members of the Society would receive in lieu of it a book of legends about lost mines and buried treasures of the Southwest to be entitled *Coronado's Children*. (This book was supposed to come out in 1929; actually it will not appear until about December, 1930.)

III. 1930

The sixteenth annual session of the Society convened in Garrison Hall, University of Texas Campus, the evening of April 25, 1930, and after meeting again Saturday afternoon and Saturday evening adjourned. President John K. Strecker presided. At the business meeting it was voted to affiliate the Society with the Texas Academy of Sciences. San Antonio was voted as the meeting place for the Society in 1931. A subscription supper at the University Cafeteria Saturday evening was well attended. The program follows:

FRIDAY EVENING

President's Address: *Totems and Totem Lore* (illustrated), John K. Strecker, Baylor University, Waco.

Archaeology of the Big Doric Cave of Santa Helena Canyon (illustrated by lantern slides), C. S. Young, North Pleasanton, Texas.

Some Indian Illustrations of the Southwest (exhibition of drawings), M. L. Crimmins, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Folk Tales about Texas Birds, Bessie Reid, Port Arthur, Texas.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

The Lost Breyfogle Mine of Death Valley, Donald F. McCarthy, Hondo, Calif. (Read by title.)

Brazos Bottom Stories, A. W. Eddins, San Antonio.

Recent Research in Folk-Song and Balladry, L. W. Payne, Jr., The University of Texas.

Legends of Wichita County, Betty Smedley, Wichita Falls.

Ranch Remedies for Horses, Frost Woodhull, San Antonio.

Oklahoma Folk Cures, Walter R. Smith, Saint Louis, Okla. (Read by title.)

Strap Buckner of the Texas Frontier, Florence E. Barns, Baylor College, Belton.

Some Legends of San Antonio Mexicans, C. A. Arnold, San Antonio.

The Vaquero Fable of the Two Hunchbacks, Captain James H. Cook, Agate, Neb. (Read by title.)

The Jointsnake, Gibbons Poteet, Roxton, Texas. (Read by title.)

SATURDAY EVENING

Some College Folk-Lore, H. B. Parks, State Agricultural Laboratory, San Antonio.

The Devil on the Border, Jovita González, The University of Texas.

Old Ben Sublett and His Gold, Frank Dobie, The University of Texas.

Officers for 1930–1931 were elected as follows:

PRESIDENT, Jovita González, St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio.

VICE-PRESIDENTS, Mrs. Bruce Reid, Port Arthur; Rebecca Smith, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth; Frost Woodhull, San Antonio.

COUNCILLORS, David Donoghue, Fort Worth; L. W. Payne, Jr., University of Texas, Austin; John K. Strecker, Baylor University, Waco.

TREASURER, Byron Shipp, University of Texas.

SECRETARY AND EDITOR, J. Frank Dobie, University of Texas.

CONTRIBUTORS

Florence Elberta Barns, who contributes a study of a folk-hero, Strap Buckner, is a professor of English at Baylor College, Belton.

Anyone who read "Folk-Lore of the Texas-Mexican Vaquero," by *Jovita González,* published in *Texas and Southwestern Lore* (the publication for 1927), will recall how eager he was for more of the same thing. "Tales and Songs of the Texas-Mexican Folk" is a charming and climactic continuation of the first contribution. For 1929–1930 Miss González held a fellowship at the University of Texas, where she specialized in the history of the border country. She will resume her position as teacher of Spanish in St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio, next year. She is president-elect of the Society.

Ernest E. Leisy teaches English in Southern Methodist University at Dallas. He is the author of one or more textbooks.

L. W. Payne's name is synonymous with that of the Texas Folk-Lore Society. He was the prime mover in organizing it in 1909, and has appeared on most of the programs and in most of the *Publications.*

Gibbons Poteet is a public-spirited banker of Roxton, Texas, who has sense enough not to take either the public or himself too seriously.

Betty Smedley, the wife of G. B. Smedley, a lawyer of Fort Worth, used to live in Austin and has lately moved from Wichita Falls. About once a year a new star swims into the ken of the Texas Folk-Lore Society. At the meeting held in Austin last April, the new star was distinctly Betty Smedley with her charming report of Belas Carter's experiences.

Rebecca W. Smith, joint author of *The Southwest in Literature,* teaches English in Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. She not only finds folk-lorists; she makes them. It is hoped that her intelligent enthusiasm will be caught by other English teachers.

Walter R. Smith had an interesting article, entitled "Animals and Plants in Oklahoma Folk Cures," in *Folk-Say,* 1929, the first publication to be issued by the Oklahoma Folk-Lore Society, of which he has for several years been a guiding spirit.

He is superintendent of the public schools at Saint Louis, Oklahoma. There is no telling what his keen eyes and ears—and "head"—will deliver before the game is played out.

When *Frost Woodhull* turned over the final form of his "Remedios" I predicted that he would run all the veterinarians and doctors in the country out of business. His own prescription for all ills is fishing. Occasionally one can find him in his law office in the Real Estate Building at San Antonio. He is collecting folk-lore now on shooting. He wants everything that everybody knows about shooting men, shots, shooting irons, and shotees. What a bullet subject he has!

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